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ABSTRACT

Drawn from a 1983 conference that focused on reading in the school, at home, and at work, the papers in this collection deal with reading strategies, assessment, programs, methods, and materials. Topics covered in the 17 papers include the following: (1) focused instruction for reading exposition, (2) repeated reading, (3) teacher interruption behaviors during intermediate grade oral reading, (4) puppetry as a way of improving language skills, (5) improving the usefulness of standardized reading test scores, (6) readiness tests, (7) a summer enrichment program for able readers, (8) the black child in current children's literature, (9) children's literature and disabled children, (10) using learning strategies to acquire competence in microcomputing, (11) the reading specialist in the resource room, and (12) using questions to teach reading. (FL)

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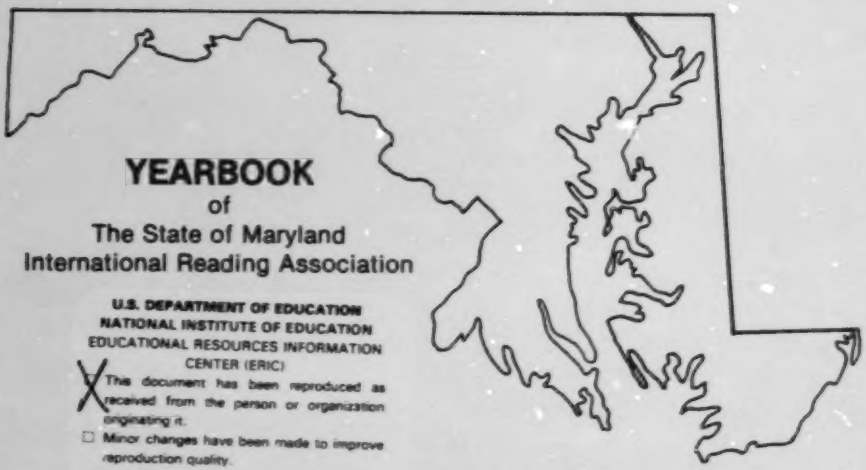
READING: PROCESS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT



YEARBOOK
of
The State of Maryland
International Reading Association

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FOREWORD

It is with great pride and pleasure that I undertake the task of introducing this, the first yearbook of the State of Maryland International Reading Association Council. For several years, the quality and scope of presentations made at our annual conference had been increasing. Participants and evaluators alike had commented that there ought to be a way to preserve the hard work and expertise of presenters. Therefore, it dawned on us that we needed some way to make more of our sessions accessible to more of our members. Thus, this yearbook.

Our 1983 conference was something special. For the first time, we made a conscious effort to involve people in our conference who were not usually in attendance. The program was planned to include three strands, as implied by our theme, "Reading at School, at Work, and at Home." Speakers were sought from private business, government, and industry--and they responded magnificently. Of course, we sponsored many presenters made by our excellent Maryland educators. Finally, we hosted many sessions on the role of parents and how they can help in the literacy process. As usual, the men and women of the publishing industry went out of their way to provide us with speakers of national recognition and whose messages were truly memorable and noteworthy. It is this mix of topic, speaker, and theme that this, our first yearbook, seeks to document and to celebrate.

Linda Gambrell is to be commended highly for preparing this yearbook, as are the many men and women who have contributed to it and who have assisted her in its production. On behalf of SoMIRAC, let me give my highest praise and gratitude to all those who assisted in its development, editing, proofreading, and distribution. We have nothing but the highest compliments for those who have done the not-so-visible, unrewarding work necessary to the development of what will be one of our most visible and enduring products in our fight against illiteracy. For the help you have given, and the vision you have shown, I, and the members of SoMIRAC, are truly and forever grateful.

Jack N. Cole
President, SoMIRAC

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FOCUSED INSTRUCTION FOR READING EXPOSITION

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Results from the 1979-80 National Assessment of Reading and Literature indicate that fewer than 30% of the 17 year-olds tested could analyze text in order to support a topic. One reason for this finding may be that students are not receiving enough practice in thinking skills which require an analysis of what they read. Instead, students are searching for answers directly stated in the text and are not applying what they know to infer and analyze. A second reason for this finding may be that standardized tests in the upper elementary and secondary grades contain more passages of exposition than narration even though students get more practice with narration in the elementary grades. Students receive instruction in how to read stories in the elementary grades. They know about characters, plot, and setting. Yet, there is little instruction in how to read exposition of informational material. Students are expected to be able to read their content area textbooks. Often, teachers focus on concepts and are at a loss in assisting students with the process of reading exposition.

Exposition is more difficult than narration. It presents objective knowledge about the world. Often, the concepts may be abstract and unfamiliar to students. If students do not have the background knowledge in which to link new concepts, they are unlikely to understand what they are reading. For example, if students are assigned a chapter on life of the Plains Indians, and they have no notion of what the Plains are, it is unlikely that they will be able to understand the chapter. The importance of background knowledge has been thoroughly discussed be schema researchers (Anderson, 1977; Rumelhart and Ortony, 1977; Spiro, 1980).

A second reason that exposition is more difficult than narration is the degree and amount of inferring required to read exposition. Readers must infer or determine relationships between sentences, among paragraphs, and in whole chapters. For example, if students are confronted with the sentences, "The Jamestown winter was rough. Many people died," they must be able to infer why the people died in order to understand those sentences. Reasons might be lack of water, lack of food, or Indian attacks, but readers must bring that information "to fill in the holes" if they are understanding what they read.

Another aspect of exposition that makes it more difficult than narration is the topical organizational varieties that exist. Some passages have the main ideas or topics stated first. Others have sentences last. Sometimes topic sentences are embedded in the middle of paragraphs, and often topic sentences are not explicitly stated so that the reader has to infer what the author's main idea is. In a study of topics in exposition it was shown that only 13% of the paragraphs began with topic sentences (Braddock, 1974) so determining topic sentence and main ideas is not easy.

Finally, within the organization of exposition, many structures may or may not be apparent to the reader. Two structures are very common in elementary textbooks. One is the explanatory structure in which reasons may be presented (e.g., the explanation of condensation or the explanation of how early life began). The other is the descriptive structure in which characteristics or qualities are related (e.g., life of the colonists, animals of the sea). What makes it difficult is that often these structures are not signaled by words such as "first, last, therefore," or there may be other structures embedded. For example, a textbook may relate how the Spanish explorers came to North America, and in this explanation there is an embedded time sequence structure. If structures are not signaled, they may become confusing for the reader.

Therefore, in reading exposition students are confronted with a range of diverse characteristics in content, vocabulary, and structure. Because of these diverse characteristics, readers must be able

to adjust their strategies depending on the purpose for reading and on specific characteristics. It becomes essential that we provide students with strategies that they can apply flexibly.

STRATEGIES FOR READING EXPOSITION

The authors developed two strategies that are generalizable to reading various types of exposition. These strategies are a part of Montgomery County Public Schools' exposition component of the reading/listening curriculum. The strategies are (1) helping students to determine the topic of a paragraph whether it is explicitly stated or implied and (2) helping students add a sentence to a paragraph which provides support to the topic.

In developing these strategies the authors presented many different kinds of paragraphs to fourth through eighth grade students in three schools and asked them to state the topic of a paragraph or to add information that could develop a topic. Then, the authors asked the students to give reasons for their responses. Through this verification procedure, students discovered whether their answers were accurate. The steps of the strategies became apparent. Three basic processes were obvious. Students had to determine relationships among ideas. Also, they had to paraphrase, that is to state the text in their own words. Finally, they had to summarize or state information concisely.

STATING THE TOPIC AS A PHRASE

The first strategy, stating the topic as a phrase, helps students to identify relationships between or among ideas and to paraphrase what they have read. The procedure is:

1. Have students read the passage.
2. Have students tell what they think the passage is about. Students may suggest more than one possible topic for the passage.
3. Ask students to verify their choice of topic. Students may use one or more of the following strategies.
   a. look for a repeated word or phrase in the passage that names the topic

b. look for other words in the passage that are referents for the topic
c. decide if each sentence in the passage is related to the topic and explain the relationship

Paragraphs in which the topic is not explicitly stated appear to be the most difficult for students. In this case, students must decide if each sentence is related to the topic and explain the relationship. The following paragraph is an example in which students must infer the topic:

> The atmosphere provides the oxygen we breathe. It protects us by night from the bleak cold of outer space, and by day from the burning rays of the sun. If there were no atmosphere to hold moisture, there would be no rain on the earth. Plants could not live, and without vegetation, there could be no animal life. Plants provide food for man and other animals and also replenish the oxygen we use.
>
> Canada
> Fideler
> 1974, p. 12

Students might tell easily that the paragraph is about "oxygen," "atmosphere," or "plants," and they might verify their choice of topics by noticing that the words are repeated. However, stating the topic in phrase which is not explicitly stated requires that students infer the relationships between each sentence and the suggested topic. Through teacher questioning, students may decide that each sentence does tell something about the suggested topic. "How does each sentence relate to the suggested topic?" is the question to pose. By analyzing each sentence, students might see that each sentence explains why the atmosphere is necessary for life. A logical topic would be "Why the Atmosphere is Necessary for Life."

By modeling the procedure for stating the topic as a phrase with many kinds of paragraphs, students benefit from the practice by becoming aware of the strategy so that they can apply it on their own.

IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH DEVELOPS THE TOPIC

The second strategy, identifying additional information which develops the topic, helps students to identify the relationships between the topic and supporting information and to add a supporting sentence to the topic. We often ask students to support their answers by elaborating on a topic. In order to do this, students have to understand relationships, and they have to be able to determine main ideas from subordinate statements. This strategy helps students to distinguish different types of statements. The procedure is:

1. Have students read the passage and identify the topic.
2. Have students reread the last sentence. Decide what additional information could be added to the passage to support the topic. This new sentence could illustrate one of the following relationships to the preceding sentence or to the topic.
   a. The new sentence could give an explanation. It may explain a cause and effect (e.g., When no potatoes were left, the Irish people starved). Often, the preceding sentence provides important clues for the explanation.
   b. The new sentence could provide an example of something mentioned in a preceding sentence (e.g., Riding horses changed the lives and cultures of western Indians. The Indians could hunt for food far from their camps).
   c. The new sentence could give additional information which describes the topic of preceding sentences. This information might not be directly related to the preceding sentence but supports the topic in some way (e.g., The new sentence states that South Africa also has large auto plants, shipyards, and steelyards. This statement supports the topic, "Industrialized South Africa.")
   d. The new sentence could provide a step of a process or temporal sequence (e.g., The sentence states that the soft part of the corn kernel pops out. This step is last in the making of popcorn).

3. Have students generate as many sentences as possible that could be added to the passage. These sentences should develop the topic in one of the above ways. Record student responses.
4. Ask students to verify their choice by determining the relationship of each sentence to the identified topic.
5. Give students the opportunity to suggest alternative paraphrases for the sentences they generated. For example, the following paragraph may be used to illustrate this strategy:

> The buffalo hides will have many uses. They will make warm robes. They will make sturdy moccasin soles and tepee skins. They will be used to make shields to protect the Pawnee from enemy spears.
>
> Americans
> American Book Company
> 1979, p. 93

First, students should identify the topic of the passage as "Use of Buffalo Hides". After rereading the last sentence, they should determine that since this sentence tells another use of buffalo skins, a logical last sentence could be a statement of another use of buffalo skins. Possible responses for an additional sentence might be:

They will also be stretched to make drums.
They will also be used for shirts and coats.
They will also be used as paper for drawings.

In order to verify their choices, students could be asked to determine how the new sentence relates to the topic. They might state that the new sentence gives another example of how buffalo hides will be used.

SUMMARY

Students practiced the steps of the strategies using different passages in their social studies and science textbooks until they could use the strategies on their own. Procedure steps were written on large charts for student's reference. The advantages were that the strategies helped

students to read exposition by having them focus on topics and supporting information. They also helped students to be able to discuss expository material in their own words. Finally, they helped students to become critical readers by analyzing passages for main ideas which often are not explicitly stated in textbooks. The goal is for students to be critical readers and to use the strategies independently when they are reading exposition.

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INSIGHTS FROM A SUSTAINED SILENT READING PROJECT: WHAT WE LEARNED BY TALKING TO TEENAGERS

Joan D. Coley
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Sustained silent reading often "works". Indeed, studies indicate that daily practice reading high interest books for an extended period of time can and does improve both reading achievement and attitude (Pfau, 1966; Lawson, 1968; Wilmot, 1975; Langford, 1978; Farrell, 1982; and Bergland and Johns, 1983). Recently, a sustained silent reading project conducted by Project READ with nearly 2,000 junior high school students in the Washington, D.C. public school system reaffirmed that sustained silent reading "works". There were significant differences between experimental and control groups in both achievement gains and positive shifts in attitude (Carsetti, Coley, Heiss, and Schwartz, 1981). The study was conducted in four junior high schools which were selected from ten potential sites. Selections were based on comparability of sample size and variety of geographic locations in the city. Two of the four schools were randomly assigned as experimental schools to implement a daily 30-minute sustained silent reading program with paperback books, and the other two schools were used as control schools.

In addition to collecting achievement test and attitudinal data for the project, a series of interviews with randomly selected students was conducted in the two experimental and two control schools. Information collected from these interviews provides interesting insights which give clues about some of the reasons why sustained silent reading can be successful. A discussion of those interviews follows.

COMPARATIVE INTERVIEWS - EXPERIMENTAL VERSUS CONTROL GROUPS

At the end of the school year, 27 student interviews were conducted in each of the four junior

high schools involved in Project READ. For each school there were nine interviews at each grade level (7, 8, and 9). In order to get a representative sample for the interviews, three below average, three average, and three above average readers were randomly selected for each grade level in each school. Selection was made based on the pre-test scores obtained from the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Survey tests. Comparative responses from experimental and control group subjects were especially revealing on two of the interview questions. For the first question, students were shown a group of ten paperback books which had been randomly selected from the composite bibliography. After examining the books, students were asked: "Which of these books would you most like to read? Why?"

There were many similarities in student responses from both experimental and control groups when asked for the reasons why they selected the books. Approximately the same number of students from each group mentioned selecting the book because the title sounded interesting. Likewise, with equal frequency both groups of students mentioned that they selected the book by category; that is, sports books, comedy books, or mystery books.

Despite the similarities between groups on several of the reasons why they chose books, there were two obvious differences. Experimental group students made more than twice as many comments related to their projections about the content of the books ("Seems like this book might tell what her life was about," or "I think it will tell about teenagers and why they drop out of school.") Secondly, students in the experimental group said they used the pictures on the cover to help them make their selections three times more frequently than did the students in the control group. Both of these factors are encouraging. Research in the area of reading comprehension indicates that students' comprehension increases when they have some idea about the content of the selection they are going to read. Speculating on content is very much analagous to purpose-setting as a reading strategy. That is, it gives the student a framework within which to operate. It is logical to assume that because students in the experimental group had many opportunities for book selection during the school

year, they became much more sophisticated in making these choices and developed workable strategies which aided in the selection process.

Students were next shown a copy of any easy paperback book and were asked: "How would you help someone who is having trouble reading this book?" For students who did not respond, there were two prompts available for use by the interviewers: 1) "Can you tell me one thing you could do to help someone having trouble reading this book?" 2) "Is there any other way you could help someone who is having trouble reading this book?"

Many of the strategies suggested by students in the experimental and control groups were similar. Approximately equal numbers of students (ten experimental and eight control) suggested reading the book out loud to the person having difficulty. Likewise, reading simultaneously with the student or taking turns reading was mentioned with equal frequency by both groups. Telling the meaning of a word and checking for comprehension were also suggested by both groups of students.

There were, however, several striking differences; students in the control group placed far greater emphasis on sounding words out, breaking them into syllables, and pronouncing the words. Thirty students in the control group mentioned syllabication compared with only twelve students in the experimental group; additionally, fourteen students from the control group versus eight experimental group students stated they would tell students how to pronounce the words they didn't know. This finding seems to indicate a strong emphasis from the control group students on basic word identification strategies as opposed to an emphasis on meaning. It is reasonable to conjecture that the exposure of students in the experimental group to nonstop reading may have encouraged them to view reading as a meaning-getting process, and thus they may place less emphasis on very basic word attack strategies. If this is the case, it is indeed an encouraging and an exciting prospect. Studies have shown that mature readers rely very little on the elementary word attack strategies and instead focus on context and meaning.

A second major difference noted between experimental and control groups was the reliance of the experimental group on independent student-directed learning. Use of dictionaries was mentioned almost twice as frequently (thirteen versus seven) by experimental students as a useful tool for someone in need of reading help. In fact, as students were observed during nonstop reading, it became obvious that many of them used the dictionary frequently. This practice was apparently both spontaneous and student-initiated, for during the training sessions, Project READ staff specifically cautioned teachers that students did not have to look up unknown words in the dictionary. It would appear that when the "penalty" of looking up every unknown word in the dictionary is removed as a requirement, students feel free to find out about those words which are important to them. Again, this is a hopeful sign, for one facet of mature, independent reading behavior is the selective use of the dictionary. Another indication of the movement toward reading independence on the part of the experimental group may be inferred from their reference to use of the library for helping someone with reading difficulty; not one student in the control group mentioned using the library.

Finally, there was a marked difference between groups in their ability to suggest what might be termed a "systematic strategy" for helping someone with a reading problem. An example of a systematic strategy suggested by an eighth grader in an experimental school was: "I can tell them what the word is and then have them spell it. Then they could study it until they know it. Then I could read the story to them, then let them read it and see if they understand it." Without judging the relative merits of each step of this student's strategy, it is nevertheless clearly more of a systematic approach to reading than "help them sound out the words," or "tell them the words they don't know and give them a dictionary." Ten students in the experimental group were able to articulate "systematic strategies" compared with only four students in the control group. If this finding is reflective of differences between the two groups as a whole, it is certainly extremely encouraging. It may be realistically inferred that increased exposure to print may allow students to develop individualized strategies for getting meaning from

print. It is likewise reasonable to speculate that the only way, or at least the best way, for students to develop these strategies is to allow them to practice a variety of strategies independently with a sizable amount of reading material. A one page ditto cannot possibly provide the same framework for such practice as 15 pages of a novel does.

Based on the data available from these interviews, it would appear that nonstop reading may indeed contribute in a powerful way to the development of mature, independent reading strategies. It may be, in fact, that nonstop reading is not a luxury which encourages this behavior to develop, but may be a necessity for developing the kinds of reading strategies needed by mature readers. It is important to note that the results from the achievement tests lend additional credence to the speculations made as a result of the interviews. There were significant differences ($p < .001$) in achievement at the end of six months when experimental and control groups were compared, and these differences were most pronounced in the area of comprehension. A complete discussion of the statistical treatment can be found in the publication entitled Instead of Seeing the Movie, You Can Read the Book (Carsetti, Coley, Heiss, and Schwartz, 1981).

SUMMARY

Researchers are often reluctant to evaluate "soft" data, preferring to rely on statistically verifiable numbers. To be sure, statistical studies contribute much to our profession. However, interviews and evaluations such as this one which focused on a large scale sustained silent reading project frequently yield tantalizing pieces of data which can serve to help explain the results of a project. It is not the aim of this article to prove that these are the benefits of sustained silent reading, but merely to suggest that insofar as these evaluations and interviews may be representative of larger numbers of students, they offer plausible explanations to help explain some of the success of sustained silent reading.

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ADAPTING REPEATED READING FOR USE IN THE CLASSROOM

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When accomplished bricklayers, neurosurgeons, typists, dancers, drummers, or other workers are asked how they became successful, they always mention that they developed their skills through practicing their art or trade. While practice may not make perfect, it clearly improves one's skills. Practice is also a vital ingredient in becoming a skilled reader. As Frank Smith has noted, you learn to read by reading (1978). Unfortunately, people who are having difficulty in learning to read seldom read when it is not required. Even if they are receiving corrective remedial instruction, when this instruction focuses on isolated skill instruction - as it often does - remedial readers still do very little reading (Allington, 1977).

Recently there has been considerable interest in a variety of repeated reading strategies and their role in developing effective and efficient reading. In characterizing the acquisition of skilled fluent reading, Downing (1983) emphasizes the critical role of integration and the importance of practice. Shreiber (1980) suggests that repeated reading strategies help readers recognize the kind of syntactic phrasing which is necessary to make sense of a written passage. Researchers using these strategies which provide substantial practice in reading prose have well documented evidence of improved fluency, word recognition, and indications of enhanced comprehension (Chomsky, 1976; Samuels, 1979; Herman, Dewitz & Stammer, 1980; Koskinen & Blum, 1982).

These strategies appear to be particularly appropriate for beginning readers and for older students who are experiencing difficulty and whose reading is awkward, halting, or word-by-word. In addition to the word recognition and comprehension benefits of repeated reading, students quickly

experience success when they hear their smooth, natural reading. New enthusiasm is generated for reading because it becomes something that students can do well.

Results of recent research indicate repeated reading is a powerful strategy in a clinical setting and suggest it can be used in a classroom setting as well. Because classroom use has been limited, our work focused on using repeated reading in a group setting to determine if variations of the procedures could be developed to encourage its wider use. Exploratory questions which guided our investigations included:

Can students use repeated reading without direct teacher supervision?
What types of evaluation procedures are effective in a group setting?
Can teachers easily provide a model of fluent reading to be used for repeated reading?

In most repeated reading studies, students worked individually with a teacher or tutor who monitored their performance. In some situations, this timing and recording that teachers or tutors did provided both motivation and evaluation. Teachers in a group setting generally have limited time for individualized teaching strategies. There is a need, therefore, to see whether repeated reading procedures can be adapted so that students can work more independently, in pairs, for example, and can take responsiblity for evaluating their own rereading.

The concept of providing a model of fluent reading is an important factor in the success of the read-along strategy discussed by Chomsky (1976) and Carbo (1978), where students listened to a taped version of the text and repeatedly read it. The use of mechanical equipment such as tape recorders or record players for this purpose, however, is at times inconvenient for a classroom teacher. Because of this, it is necessary to consider alternative ways for students to hear fluent reading of material they are to read repeatedly.

USING REPEATED READING IN THE CLASSROOM

Procedures described in this article were developed and refined in pilot and demonstration studies conducted in both a university summer clinic and regular classroom settings. We worked with 18 experienced teachers and 46 remedial readers in grades two through six. Students' reading levels ranged from preprimer to 3[1] (Blum & Koskinen, 1982).

Students used the repeated reading strategy two or three times a week over a five week period. Materials at the students' instructional levels were jointly selected by teachers and students. Passages were no more than 100 words in length, and included selections from basals, trade books, and language experience stories. Students worked in pairs, helping each other, and teachers encouraged the pairs to work independently.

When students were introduced to repeated reading, they were told they would be reading their passages several times so that they would get better and better at reading them. Teachers often mentioned an analogy such as basketball players shooting foul shots over and over to improve their skills. Teachers also mentioned that the students would be evaluating their own reading.

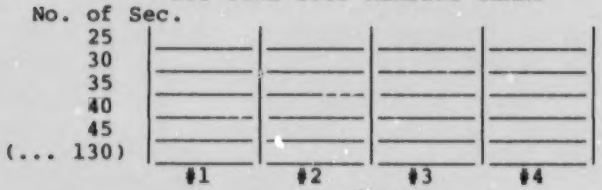
Teachers were given the following basic repeated reading guidelines:

1. Have students read the passage silently before reading it aloud to their parents.
2. Have students decide who will be the first reader. The other person will be the listener.
3. Have the reader read the passage aloud to the partner (Reader can ask partner for help).
4. At this point, have the reader mark the evaluation sheet (Figure 1 or Figure 2) for "Reading 1".
5. Have the reader read the passage aloud a second time and then mark the evaluation sheet for "Reading 2".
6. Have the reader read the passage aloud a third time and mark the evaluation sheet for "Reading 3".
7. Have the reader look at the reading sheet and decide whether the reading has improved.
8. When the first reader is finished, the second reader then reads a different passage aloud and follows procedures # 3 - 7.

Figure 1

Name _____ Date _____

DOG GONE GOOD READING CHART



NUMBER OF READINGS

Did reading your passage a few times help you understand it better? YES NO

Did reading your passage a few times help you read it more smoothly? YES NO

Figure 2

Name _____ Date _____

DOG GONE GOOD READING CHART

Directions: Circle the dog that shows how you read.

Reading #1

How well did you read?

fantastic good fair not so good terrible

Did reading your passage a few times help you understand it better? YES NO

Did reading your passage a few times help you read it more smoothly? YES NO

Dog drawings selected from "Reading Attitude Inventory," Campbell P. Livonia Public Schools, Livonia, Michigan, 1966.

Using the basic repeated reading guidelines described above, teachers explored the use of two different ways to help students evaluate their reading. The first was an adaptation of the timed evaluation procedure used by Samuels (1976). This involved students rereading their passages while the partners timed each reading and recorded the time on an evaluation chart (Figure 1). The second type of evaluation involved students rating themselves on a Likert-type self evaluation scale after each reading (Figure 2).

Teachers also explored the viability of providing a fluent model prior to reading. They experimented with reading the students' passages to them just prior to beginning the basic repeated reading procedures and not providing a model of fluent reading before students read their passages silently.

EFFECTIVENESS OF REPEATED READING

Repeated reading was evaluated by using descriptive procedures (with appropriate comparison groups) (Blum & Koskinen, 1982). Data included length of sessions and samples of reading materials used. Attitude data related to students' and teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of different aspects of the strategy. Both students and teachers completed evaluation measures relating to the repeated reading sessions. In addition, observational data was provided by teachers who monitored the students.

Can students use repeated reading without direct supervision? A summary of teacher responses on evaluation forms and in evaluation meetings indicates participants felt that with some supervision and minimal training, pairs of students could work independently in group settings. This reaction expressed by teachers in the summer program was reiterated and confirmed by teachers who used the strategy in their classrooms.

Seventeen of the eighteen teachers who participated in the investigations reported that the repeated reading strategy could be integrated successfully into classroom instruction and that they would use the strategy again. Without exception they were extremely enthusiastic about their own experiences and those of their students.

The following points were most frequently made by the teachers:

- the strategy helped the students feel better about themselves as readers;
- having students document their own performances was important because it helped them recognize their improvement;
- there was a high degree of interest generated by the strategy;
- repeated reading could be used with a variety of materials.

Equally important, 98 percent of the students reported they enjoyed using the repeated reading strategy and would like to continue using it on a regular basis. Eighty-eight percent indicated that

repeated reading helped them to read more smoothly, and 93 percent indicated that using the strategy helped them understand what they read.

An issue of some concern to the teachers in the initial summer program involved clarifying the role of the listener. There were several purposes for having students read to a partner. Prior studies and our own teaching experience suggested that reading to a partner would provide additional motivation for the activity. We also believed that listening to someone reread might help the listener learn to notice aspects that make for better reading. Finally, having students work in pairs seemed one way to solve the logistical problem of using this strategy in a group setting. However, these purposes were not made clear to the students in the summer program, and teachers noted it was sometimes difficult for the listener to stay on task.

To help students understand the listener's role and encourage their active participation in the rereading, teachers in the classroom setting discussed this purpose and role as part of introducing the activity. Listeners completed a listener's guide (Figure 3) following each of their partners' readings. This guide indicated at least one way the reading improved. Our classroom teachers reported that explicit discussion of the role of the listener and use of the listener's guide improved the effectiveness of the strategy. Teachers noted the positive effect that specific compliments had on readers. Teachers also felt that monitoring a partner's reading helped students monitor their own reading as well.

Figure 3

Listener _____ Date _____

DOG GONE GOOD LISTENING SHEET

Reading #1

I listened to _____ read.

Reading #2

How did your partner's reading get better?
He or she read more smoothly. ____
He or she knew more words. ____
He or she read with more expression. ____
* Tell your partner one thing that was better about his or her reading.

Reading #3

How did your partner's reading get better?
He or she read more smoothly. ____
He or she knew more words. ____
He or she read with more expression. ____
* Tell your partner one thing that was better about his or her reading.

Dog drawings selected from "Reading Attitude Inventory," Campbell, P. Livonia Public Schools, Livonia, Michigan, 1966.

Is It Possible to Use Different Types of Evaluation? Both timed evaluation and self-evaluation appear to be motivating and effective in helping students document their progress. However, the mechanical problems of having enough clocks or watches with second hands and training students to time one another and graph results led almost all teachers to prefer the Likert-type self-evaluation techniques. If repeated reading were to be used frequently, though, timing and graphing results might be a way to add variety to the reading strategy.

Can Teachers Easily Provide a Model for Repeated Reading? Because of the positive response by many participants, we feel that the use of a model prior to reading is a variation of the repeated reading strategy that deserves consideration. It does, however, require more teacher involvement. If it is to be used in a setting where many students are reading the same story, the teacher may want to read a few sections aloud during the group reading period while students follow along. Students can then work in pairs, repeatedly reading a passage they select from those which the teacher has modeled.

We are hopeful that these promising results will encourage additional attempts to refine repeated reading so it can be used easily as a classroom instructional strategy. Recent attempts to synthesize the considerable body of research focused on comprehension indicate that while many skills are involved and breakdowns occur differentially, one thing that does improve comprehension is practice (Perfetti & Lesgold, 1979; Golinkoff, 1975). Successful learners seem to seek the practice they need to master new skills spontaneously. It appears that repeated reading may provide this kind of practice for children who are not automatically doing so. Our experience suggests that the student teams in group settings provide assistance and support in a functional, natural and comfortable situation.

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REPEATED READING WITH PEER TUTORS

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One of the greatest challenges to be met when working with students who are experiencing difficulty in reading lies in the area of self-concept and attitude toward reading. Generally, the longer the duration of the reading difficulties the greater the challenge to motivate.

Assessing feelings about self and attiude toward reading is a complex and frequently imprecise task. There are often problems with instrumentation when trying to obtain an accurate measure of something as nebulous and difficult to define as attitude.

With regard to reading, there is evidence to suggest that attitudes of the reader may affect comprehension (Alexander & Filler, 1976). In addition, the development of more favorable attitudes may result in increased reading achievement. It is difficult to determine the precise order in which this occurs. It may be, in fact, that attitude toward reading and reading achievement improve concurrently.

Fredericks (1982) suggests that since achievement is affected by students attitude toward reading, we should plan instruction that promotes positive feelings about reading. The following project was designed with the primary goal of enhancing self-concept and developing a more positive attitude toward reading.

A secondary goal was to develop accuracy and fluency in oral reading through the following theoretically based strategies:

1. Identification of characteristics of fluent and non-fluent reading by analyzing tape recorded examples of each.

2. Utilization of the method of repeated readings (Samuels, 1979).
3. Use of peer learning and self evaluation techniques.

Allington (1983) recently referred to oral reading fluency as "the neglected reading goal" (p. 556). He argued further that although lack of fluency in oral reading is often noted as a characteristic of poor reading, it is seldom treated. According to the evidence, oral reading fluency appears to be trainable and also appears to have the potential to improve overall reading ability (Samuels, 1979).

LaBerge and Samuels (1974) have provided a strong rationale for developing accuracy and fluency in oral reading through their theory of automatic information processing. According to this theory, the reader decodes text automatically, leaving attention free to be used for comprehension. They have suggested that the method of repeated readings be used as a means of developing fluency and enhancing comprehension.

THE METHOD OF REPEATED READINGS

The method of repeated readings simply involves having the reader select a short passage from a story and reread the passage aloud. The oral reading becomes more fluent with each successive reading. Interestingly, in a study by Gonzales and Elijah (1975) oral reading errors on an IRI decreased by 3% with no other intervention but a second reading.

The oral reading may or may not be accompanied by an audio support such as another reader who is modeling fluent oral reading or a tape. When accompanied in this manner it is usually referred to as "reading with." It is crucial that models of fluent oral reading be provided and also that readers are made aware that fluency is the goal.

PEER TUTORING

Peer tutoring has been incorporated into this project in the sense that readers assisted one another by providing constructive, corrective feedback to each other in a very positive, non-

threatening atmosphere. The research on peer tutoring shows that positive gains are frequently made by both tutee and tutor especially in the area of attitude (Riessman, 1969; Larsen & Ehly, 1976). This same body of research also reveals that peer tutoring is most successful when the task is well-defined and a positive and supportive atmosphere is created and maintained throughout the entire experience (Mavrogenes & Galen, 1979).

Procedure

Eight fourth-grade students and two fifth-grade students participating in a corrective-remedial reading program were invited to participate in this project. All students scored within a range of 88 to 98 on the standardized group intelligence test administered earlier in the year as part of the Maryland Accountability Program. All were reading below grade level and experiencing difficulties in other academic areas. Several were also having behavior problems within the classroom.

Participation in the project was voluntary yet all ten students appeared eager to become involved. The project was conducted over a six-week period. Each week included two structured sessions. The instructors maintained a positive and accepting attitude throughout and answered student questions about the project whenever they arose. What follows is a step by step procedure for student involvement.

WEEK I

Pretests and Overview

1. Pretest the students with the Botel Word Recognition Test (1978), the Botel Word Opposites Test (1978), and a reading Attitude/Self Concept Inventory (See Appendix A).
2. Conduct an overview with the students about their roles in the project.

WEEK II

Analysis of Oral Reading

1. Discuss as a group how they think good and poor readers sound.

2. List their ideas.
3. Listen to a tape of poor oral readers.
4. Add to and alter the list.
5. Listen to a tape of good oral readers.
6. Add to and alter the list.
7. Assign each item on the lists to one of the characteristics of good oral reading: fluency, expression, speed, or volume.

WEEK III

Selection of Books/Begin Practice

1. Discuss books that might be of interest to a kindergartener.
2. List the location in the library, the types, authors, characters, and characteristics of a good book.
3. Select books in the media center with the assistance of the media specialist.
4. Obtain approval of book as appropriate for the listener.
5. Make commitment to keep that book.
6. Read the book and be able to give an oral summary to the instructor.

WEEK IV

Practice

1. Have each student tape one page before structured practice begins for self-evaluation.
2. Practice oral reading in pairs and self-evaluate.
3. Read along with a professionally taped book, if appropriate.

WEEK V

Reading With Kindergarteners

1. Practice modeling good oral reading in pairs. Practice how to sit, hold the book and read.
2. Meet the kindergarteners in the media center.
3. Get settled in an area and read.
4. Individually, discuss feelings about the experience with the instructor.

WEEK VI

Post-Testing and Project Evaluation

1. Post-test the readers with the Botel Word Recognition Test, Botel Word Opposites Test and the Reading Attitude/Self Concept Inventory.
2. Have a final discussion of perceptions about the different elements of the project.

Results

The results of the Reading Attitude/Self Concept Inventory and the Botel Word Recognition and Word Opposites Test are discussed separately.

READING ATTITUDE/SELF CONCEPT INVENTORY

A Reading Attitude/Self Concept Inventory was constructed containing items designed to measure attitude toward reading and self concept, in general. This inventory was employed as a pre- and post-test. It was read aloud to the participants to prevent reading difficulties from interfering with the subject's comprehension of the items. Of the 10 subjects participating in the study, absence and failure to complete the inventory resulted in the elimination of data for two subjects. The results of the remaining eight are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

PRE- AND POST- READING/SELF CONCEPT INVENTORY
RESULTS BY INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

Student #

	1 pre/post	2 pre/post	3 pre/post	4 pre/post
TOTAL SCORE	54 55	53 55	49 60	46 56
READING ITEMS	31 25	32 33	28 33	27 30
SELF CONCEPT ITEMS	23 30	21 21	21 27	19 26

Student #

	5 pre/post	6 pre/post	7 pre/post	8 pre/post
TOTAL SCORE	59 72	58 66	56 38	38 49
READING ITEMS	34 39	28 36	28 18	15 25
SELF CONCEPT ITEMS	25 33	30 30	28 20	23 24

MEAN GAINS

TOTAL	4.6
READING ATTITUDE	2.0
SELF CONCEPT	2.6

With the exception of one subject, all subjects scored higher on the post-test than on the pretest. The mean gain was 4.6 points indicating a tendency for attitude toward reading and self concept to improve. When reading attitude items alone were analyzed the mean gain for the group was 2.0 points. Likewise, when self concept items were measured, the

mean gain was slightly higher (2.6 points).

The scores of one subject declined in all three categories. This particular subject was highly motivated throughout the project and experienced a high rate of success. One possible explanation for this downward trend is that the subject verbalized her excitement about selecting another book and repeating the procedure and was quite disappointed when presented with a paper/pencil task instead of an opportunity to select another book to read to an eager kindergartener.

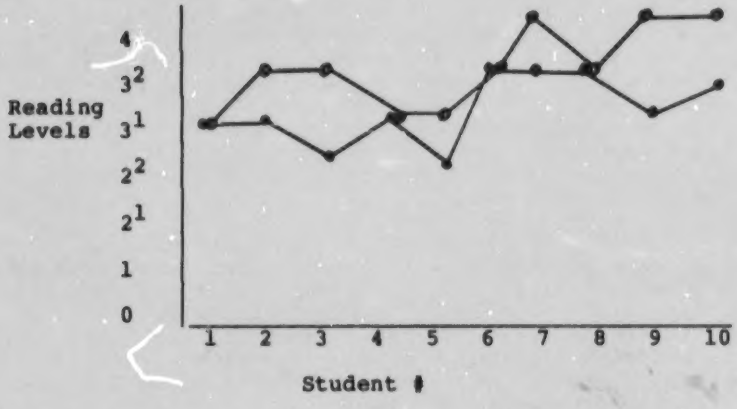
READING ACHIEVEMENT

Reading achievement was assessed through the use of the Botel Word Recognition Test (to measure sight vocabulary) and the Botel Word Opposites Test (to obtain some measure of comprehension). Both of these subtests of the Botel Inventory are informal instruments frequently used by classroom and reading teachers to assist in grouping for instruction and selecting instructional materials for students.

Results of the Botel Word Recognition Test show that the performance of four subjects remained constant. Four subjects made gains of at least one instructional level and the reading achievement of two subjects increased by two reading levels.

Figure 1

Pre- And Post- Botel Word Recognition Scores
By Individual Students

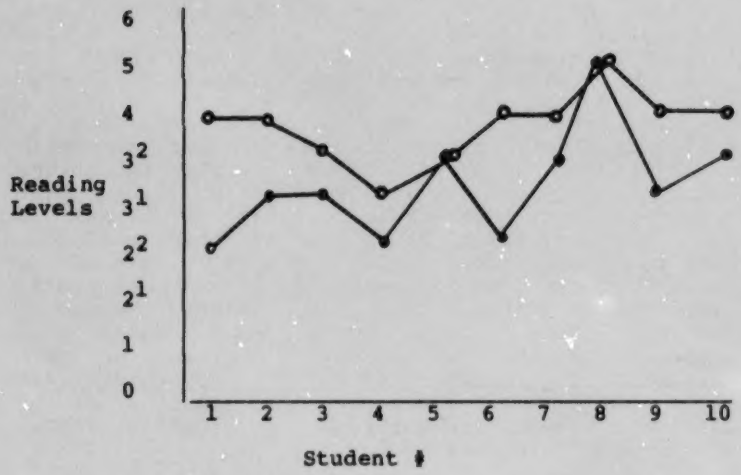


Pre-test ———
Post-test ———

A comparison of Botel Word Opposites pre- and post-test results indicated reading achievement gains for eight of the ten subjects. Four subjects improved by at least one reading level; two subjects improved by two levels and two subjects made gains of three reading levels.

Figure II

Pre- And Post- Botel Word Opposites Scores
By Individual Students



Pre-test ———
Post-test ———

Since it is possible that the Hawthorne effect may have contributed to the higher scores it is necessary that these achievement gains be verified through actual performance in instructional reading activities over time. It does appear that the overall reading achievement of the subjects who participated in this project increased.

The less dramatic results on the Reading Attitude/Self Concept Inventory may be attributed to change in attitude being a much more gradual process and a more difficult change to detect. The use of an informal instrument such as the one developed for this project has the disadvantage of not permitting comparison by norms. It may also lack the sensitivity of standardized instruments used to measure self concept and/or reading attitude. It did however, provide the investigators with an informal, fairly specific, easy to administer measure of reading attitude and self-concept.

IMPLICATIONS

While the small number of subjects participating in the project limit interpretation of the results, it is evident that both reading achievement and reading attitude can be improved through increased awareness of the student about the purpose of reading and demonstrated student success.

Participants in this project were able to experience fast, fluent, accurate, and automatic oral reading firsthand. They were able to monitor their own progress and were also given the opportunity to demonstrate their success by sharing the newly acquired skill with an attentive audience. They took responsibility for and were in control of their own learning and proceeded at their own pace, experiencing a high rate of success. Receiving specific feedback about their reading performance appeared to have a very positive effect on self concept. The enormous success of the project was illustrated when immediately following the sharing sessions students enthusiastically inquired, "When can we do this again?"

Appendix A

Code: _____ Date: _____

DIRECTIONS:

Listen carefully as each statement is read to you.
Think about its meaning and how you feel about each statement.
Circle the number that best describes your feelings about each statement.

READING/SELF CONCEPT INVENTORY

1.	I like to read stories about famous people.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I can do almost anything if I try hard enough.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I like to read animal stories.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I like to read all kinds of stories.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I get poor grades on my report card.	1	2	3	4	5

6.	If I can't think of the answer right away, I give up.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I enjoy reading books about children my own age.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Reading is a difficult thing to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I read stories that teach you how to make things.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I am a good student.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I get blamed for things that happen in class even when I didn't do them.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I have lots of friends at school.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I like to read mysteries.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I like to help others learn to read.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	My teachers seem to like read.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I like stories that are funny.	1	2	3	4	5

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TEACHER INTERRUPTION BEHAVIORS DURING INTERMEDIATE GRADE ORAL READING

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In spite of years of concern about diagnosis, prescription, and remediation, we still have students in our classrooms whose reading achievement is not up to expectations. While many educational specialists continue to diagnose and prescribe for these students, there is now an added concern for them on the part of researchers in reading. That added concern has focused on the manner in which high- and low-achieving students are treated in the classroom.

An examination of the treatment of high- and low-group readers has been approached in various manners. Allington (1980) states that in the last decade research has taken four somewhat different approaches; viz., a consideration of amount of time allocated for instruction (Alpert, 1973); of teacher-learner verbal interaction (Gumperz & Hernandez-Chavez, 1972; McDermott, 1977); of teacher instruction (Allington, 1980; Alpert, 1975; Durkin, 1979); and of how time is spent in compensatory instruction (Howlett & Weintraub, 1979). All of these studies generally indicate that the poor readers are dealt with differently by their teachers than are better readers.

One particular area studied by Allington (1980) was that of teacher's verbal behaviors during primary grade oral reading. He noted that Alpert (1974) found only small qualitative differences in teacher behavior and these seemed to favor lower ability groups. In general, according to Alpert's study, there was no difference in "good" teacher behaviors across ability groups, but it must be cautioned that her list of "good" teacher behaviors of a verbal nature apparently did nothing to facilitate development of reading skills.

Weinstein (1976) found new differences in teachers' behaviors across ability group during whole class instruction. During ability-group instruction, high-achievers received more criticism, but fewer evaluative comments. In the case of poor achievers, they received more praises after correct responses and after performances of oral reading in general.

Both these studies lacked a standard definition of "good" verbal behaviors and included descriptions of good verbal behaviors, praise, and criticism that made it difficult to determine how the teachers actually interacted with different groups of students.

Gumperz and Hernandez-Chavez (1972) provided a description of differences in teachers' verbal behaviors during oral reading of good and poor readers. They observed that poor readers were interrupted immediately at point of error and errors were treated in isolation while good readers were corrected less frequently at point of error, and errors were treated in the context of the story.

McDermott (1977) and McGill-Franzen (1978) described the same type of interruption differences, but without empirical evidence, while Brophy and Evertson (1976) showed that teachers of high-achievement classrooms did not focus on minor oral-reading errors but kept the lesson moving along by pronouncing a word or assisting with a partial response. In some schools they observed teachers providing phonic clues, but in other schools semantic-syntactic information received emphasis as the reader was directed to reread the sentence after an error.

In their correlation research, Brophy and Evertson (1976) showed that teacher interruptions generally were correlated negatively with achievement. Thus, the implication was drawn that good readers' oral reading was less likely to be interrupted than poor readers'. All of the above observational/correlational research studies failed, however, to provide classification systems that make it clear if the specific interruption behavior could be labelled as positive or negative, this being necessary to delineate the nature of the interaction between teachers and learners in high- and low-

achieving reading groups.

As additional background for his design, Allington also considered the nature of reading instruction and referred to current shifts in views of oral-reading errors in the work of Adams and Collins (1978) who are concerned with schema theory and Goodman and Goodman (1977) and Smith (1977) who advance the psycholinguistic model with the former's concern with miscue analysis. These studies, however, did not focus on teachers' interruptions following children's oral reading.

Allington, having determined that observational/correlational research on teachers' interruption behavior had failed to provide an acceptable classification system for specific interruptions, and that observational studies on reading instruction had failed to focus on teachers' interruptions following children's oral reading, designed a study that would examine teachers' interruption behaviors in naturalistic settings in which type and frequency of interruption behaviors would be examined during oral reading. This latter condition of oral reading was included in spite of the Harris and Sipay (1975) recommendation that reading instruction focus on silent reading. To substantiate this oral reading approach, he cited the study of Howlett and Weintraub (1979) in which a survey of instructional practices in primary grades showed more than 80% of teachers were allowing oral reading time as part of their instructional practices in primary grades, particularly when the basal, phonics, and LEA approaches were being used.

Based on Allington's design in which interruption behaviors of primary-grade teachers during the oral reading of their students were observed and tabulated, this replication study was undertaken in response to his recommendation that it might be well to examine teachers' interruption behaviors at different developmental levels.

Method

Subjects

The three fifth grade teachers in a single school in a central Maryland County were asked to participate in this activity after permission had

been obtained from the building principal. It was explained that they were to audiotape a regular reading group session with their top groups and another with their low groups. They were encouraged to elicit oral reading responses to their questions about the basal materials each used. Table 1 shows the distribution of subjects in the two groups.

Table 1

Number and Sex of Subjects in the Two Reading Groups

	Male		Female		Total	
Reader Group	n	Average per group	n	Average per group	n	Average per group
Good	12	4	20	6.7	32	10.7
Poor	15	5	12	4.0	27	9.0

Each teacher supplied copies of the basals used during the group instructional sessions. In one case, a workbook, in which directions for a follow-up activity were given during the instructional session, was also provided. All of these materials were the appropriate level basals for instruction of the various levels represented. They represented the three county-accepted series published by Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanich, Harper and Row, and Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. As indicated, no special lessons were planned for audiotaping. The teachers used the portion of the basals they were to use next as part of their instructional plans.

Procedure

The data of primary interest were the teachers' interruption behaviors that occurred during the instructional sessions while the students were orally reading connected discourse individually. This particular qualification of individuals' oral reading of connected discourse was necessary in determining interruptions at errors because, as mentioned before, one group did choral reading of poetry as part of the taping session.

The interruptions were scored on the basis of two dimensions: the point of interruption and the direction of interruption. The point of interruption groups included the following:

No interruption - The teacher made no verbal response to the error.

At error - The teacher interrupted the reader at the point or error. Interruptions included comments when students hesitated or paused at work.

After interruption - The teacher interrupted the reader at some point after the error was made in reading the text.

The direction of interruption categories included the following:

Graphemic - The teacher comments about an error concerned with a visual aspect of the word. For example, if a "d" were substituted for a "b" at the beginning of a word, the teacher would interrupt and call attention to the error through suitable questioning such as "What is that first letter? No, that's not a 'd'."

Phonemic - Teacher comments when an error is made in a phoneme-grapheme relationship. Comments would be "Sound it out.", "What sound does that letter make?", "It's the short sound."

Semantic and syntactic - The teacher directs the reader to reconsider what's been read because it doesn't make sense. Appropriate comments would be "Does that make sense?", "Read that again.", "That doesn't sound right to me."

Teacher pronounce - The teacher only provided the correct pronunciation of the word.

Other - All other responses not categorizable in the other four categories would be considered in this category. This would include a brief written description of the verbal behavior. Comments would include a simple, "No.", "Try to get that word.", "You know that word.", and "What?".

Results

Analysis of the data on teachers' interruptions of good and poor readers indicated that with fifth grade reading groups teachers interrupted poor reading groups almost twice as frequently as they did good reading groups. This tendency of greater interruption of oral reading by low-achieving readers in group situations as compared with high-achieving readers in their groups would follow the same pattern observed with teachers instructing high- and low-achieving reading groups in primary grades. Table 2 and Table 3 show these analyses.

Table 2

Mean Number of Reader Errors and Reader Interruption Behaviors by Each Reading Group

Reader Group	Total Errors		Interruptions		No Interruptions	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Good	16	10.61	3	3.55	13	6.78
Poor	8.3	3.29	2.3	1.24	6	3.83

Table 3

Teachers' Interruptions of Fifth Grade Oral Reading (%)

Reader Group	Teacher Groups			
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Total
Good	6.25	0	27.89	18.75
Poor	33.33	50	33.33	36.0

When teachers' interruptions were analyzed on the basis of direction of interruption (Table 4), the greatest percentage of interruptions were "teacher pronounce" as had been the case with primary teachers' interruptions.

Table 4

Direction of Interruption (%)

Reader Group	Total	Graphemic	Phonemic
Good	9	0	0
Poor	9	22.22	0

Reader Group	Semantic-Syntactic	Teacher Pronounce	Other
Good	0	100	0
Poor	0	77.77	0

However, the percentage for this particular category of interruption showed that it was greater for the good fifth grade group as compared to the high primary group, i.e., 100% for good fifth grade while it was 71.4% for the low fifth grade group in contrast to 38% for the high primary group and 50% for low primary group. This indicates that this category was the only direction of interruption for high fifth grade while this was not the case with the high primary grade readers. Where Allington was able to assess the interruptions as being semantically appropriate or inappropriate, it was not meaningful to apply this type of analysis to errors which were primarily of a pronunciation nature and not of a semantic basis.

Discussion

The findings of this replication study of teachers' interruption behaviors with fifth graders reading orally are generally consistent with the findings of the original study conducted by Allington with primary graders reading orally. The data indicated that fifth grader teachers are more likely to interrupt poor readers than good readers when an error is made during oral reading which is part of an instructional session.

Weaknesses of this replication include a smaller number of teachers interrupting the oral

reading and being audiotaped than the original study done with primary children, a smaller number of students making errors, all the teachers and the students being from the one same school, and only one reviewer recording data while listening to the audiotapes. All of these factors differed from the original study. If these had all been exactly like the corresponding factors in the study with primary students, there is the question if the results would have been the same as they are in this replication.

Another consideration in comparing the results achieved with primary grade and fifth grade students is the degree of high-achievement and low-achievement of the good and poor groups. It is possible that the high-achievers at the fifth grade level are considerably more above grade level than the high-achievers in the primary grades. Conversely, it is possible that the fifth grade low-achievers are considerably more below grade level than their counterparts in primary grades. Furthermore, it is highly probable that these fifth grade students who have lacked much success in their reading achievement have developed attitudes which affect their performance in oral and silent reading negatively and that primary grade readers do not possess such attitudes.

Since teacher behaviors are the chief concern, more should be considered about the results in reference to teachers. Certainly more meaningful results from both groups of teachers would be possible if the teachers had been studied in more than one instructional session to determine if their behavior is consistent in all sessions.

Allington (1980) addresses the point that fluent reading, as described by Rumelhart (1976), involves both top-down and bottom-up processing with the reader alternating according to the material being read and the reader's individual characteristics. Mention should be made, too, of the fact that instructional emphasis shifts from concern with the various components of decoding skills with primary readers to concern with deriving meaning from content with intermediate readers. Intermediate teachers, for instance, do not show the same concern for phonics skills that primary teachers do.

It should also be mentioned that the materials and methods of instruction would affect oral reading itself because of the audience hearing the oral reading. Howlett and Weintraub (1979) point out that in basal, LEA, and phonics approaches the reader directs his oral reading to the class, while in individualized approaches and sometimes LEA, the oral reading is directed to the adult teacher. Further study, then, should be made of the materials and methods employed in teaching the reading which will be done orally.

Variations in teachers' interruptions should be studied further for consistency not only on a day-to-day basis for individual teachers as has already been mentioned, but also from teacher to teacher. There is the question, as evident from the differences in the direction of the interruptions data, of why primary-grade teachers' interruptions were more varied than those of the fifth grade teachers'. There is also a question of why some teachers interrupt at a particular cue while others fail to do so.

There is, then, more to be explored in this area of teachers' interruptions during oral reading with good and poor readers at various developmental levels of reading instruction. As new studies contribute new findings to the body of knowledge available in this area of concern, teachers as well as students will be the benefactors of the new findings which will be available to apply to instructional situations.

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ENHANCING THE PREDICTION PROCESS

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The importance of using prior knowledge to comprehend reading materials has been emphasized during the last few years. Some refer to this as hypothesis testing; others call it guessing. Frank Smith uses the term "prediction" to describe this use of prior knowledge (1975, p. 305).

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the use of a strategy for enhancing prediction in reading. A strategy is offered to encourage the use of prediction by students who, for various reasons, do not appear to predict.

According to Smith (1975, p. 306), "prediction is the prior elimination of unlikely alternatives." This means that when faced with many choices, the improbable options are discarded. It is not meant to denote wild guessing nor is it meant to imply that one must have E.S.P. When predicting, one should be eliminating all unlikely alternatives and be making a choice that has a high probability of being correct in that situation.

PREDICTION IN READING

Smith (1975, p. 305) states that "reading is impossible without prediction." In other words, prediction is vital to comprehension. The fluent reader is one who predicts frequently (Olshavsky, 1976-1977). As the reader predicts he discards improbable alternatives, thereby decreasing the amount of visual information the brain has to process. This reduces the amount of time required for decision making, resulting in more fluent reading (Smith, 1975). It is not necessary to predict exact words or ideas. It is, however, necessary to eliminate unlikely ones (Smith, 1978).

In what other ways is prediction helpful when reading? Smith offers several answers.

1. Although the spelling of a word often does not correspond with its pronunciation, if one knows what a word is likely to be, he can use his phonics skills to confirm or reject that expectation.
2. When one predicts, he is already thinking about the meaning of the print. He is not just sounding out letters - there is a purpose to his reading.
3. Sometimes a new word may not be in the student's vocabulary. When predicting, a one-to-one match is not necessary; rather, the focus is on meaning. For example, it should be acceptable for a child to say "home" instead of "house."

PREDICTION AND READING IN THE CLASSROOM

Smith (1975, p. 305) asserts that "since it is only through reading that children learn to read, it follows that the opportunity to develop and employ skills of prediction must be a critical part of learning to read." It is important to offer opportunities in the classroom for the students to practice their prediction skills.

Smith (1975) says that for children to get the maximum benefit from predicting, two conditions must be met. The first condition is that children must have materials that make sense to them. If they cannot understand or relate to what they read, they will not be able to make predictions.

The second condition is that the children must feel at liberty to make these predictions and feel comfortable about taking risks. Those children who refuse to take risks are not reading efficiently - they are usually the slow, halting readers. Again, it is not necessary for the exact word to be predicted - the meaning is what is important.

WHY TEACH PREDICTION?

Tulving and Gold (1963) found that the rejection of unlikely alternatives using prior knowledge is exercised automatically by the human brain. Smith (1975) says it is not necessary to teach prediction because everyone who can comprehend spoken language is capable of prediction. Then why teach prediction? Unfortunately, many children

simply do not predict. Somewhere along the way, they have learned not to take risks. Perhaps it was due to the fear of ridicule by friends who read better. Possibly the classroom teacher was impatient. Maybe prediction was discouraged. Whatever the reason, many below-average readers do not predict.

To ensure that children do predict when reading, it can be beneficial to teach prediction. When instructing the students, it is important that the teacher discuss the reasons for prediction and the fact that risk-taking is involved. When doing group prediction activities, it is essential to demonstrate acceptance by being receptive to all possible answers.

There are many ways to encourage prediction in the classroom. According to Bridge (1979, p. 504), "the key to making reading easier for the beginning reader lies in finding materials for initial reading instruction that are easy and meaningful, thus predictable." Pattern books are a good example. The teacher can read these aloud to students and have them respond with the pattern at the appropriate time. The same thing can be done with rhyming books. Rhymes are often easy to predict and the matching sounds are quite euphonious. An additional strategy for teaching prediction will now be illustrated, followed by the advantages of using it.

A STRATEGY TO ENCOURAGE PREDICTION - PREDICTION AND GREETING CARDS

This activity not only reinforces prediction; it also involves functional reading. There are at least half a dozen occasions during each year of children's lives when they receive a greeting card. There are even more occasions when they could send one. The following activity employs greeting cards to increase awareness of prediction skills.

1. Ask for responses to this question: "What are some occasions on which one might receive a greeting card?" List the students' responses on the chalkboard.
2. Read actual messages from greeting cards asking the class to guess on which occasion the card was sent. Discuss with the students

how they knew which way to respond.

3. Pass out a piece of paper on which approximately ten messages from greeting cards have been written. For each message, blanks should have replaced highly predictable words. One example might be, "Congratulations on your new baby _____. I hope he brings you lots of joy." Read each message aloud and have students fill in the blanks by predicting what the missing words should be. For some blanks, include the first letter of the missing word as an extra clue, e.g. "May this holiday season be filled with l_____ and happiness."
4. Orally review the responses, noting how many different answers were found for each blank. Point out that most students chose the same word. Guide students to realize that the words omitted were highly predictable words. At this point, relate the activity with reading an unknown word (Sometimes by predicting one can guess the correct word, etc.)
5. Have the students look through magazines to select one word they find pleasing. Have them cut it out and paste it to a piece of folded construction paper. From this they create their own greeting card, using the chosen word as part of the inside message. They are to write the card with a particular occasion in mind.
6. Share some of the greeting cards with the class by reading the inside greeting aloud. Let the others decide for which occasion it was intended.
7. Post a large list of all of the words and occasions that were selected for the greeting card construction. Read the list to the class, discussing the meaning of each word. Then have the class read the list back to you to give them practice in pronouncing the words. When assigning the next written task, require that they select one new word from the list to include in their paper. Do this frequently to enhance their vocabulary. Encourage the students to contribute new and interesting words they learn to the list.

The benefits of the above strategy are numerous. First of all, the students will become aware of their prediction skills. This is called "metaprediction." Knowing that this is a skill necessary for reading can be of assistance when encountering new materials.

Secondly, the above strategy is geared towards finding success and building confidence. "One of the most formidable impediments to prediction, at all levels of reading, is anxiety. A child who is afraid to make a mistake is by definition anxious, and therefore unwilling to take the necessary risks of prediction" (Smith, 1975, p. 311). The teacher who demonstrates a receptive attitude when employing prediction strategies will be helpful in eliciting the trust of those formerly unwilling to predict.

The strategy involves reading (via the magazines and handout). No reading skill should be taught with the intention that it is important to know in and of itself. It should be clear that a skill is important because of its relationship to reading. Children should be given a chance to practice the new skill while doing "real" reading.

Another advantage is that vocabulary will be increased to some degree. For example, new words are emphasized when the teacher posts and discusses the list of words chosen by the class. The frequent use of this list and constant additions will aid in vocabulary development.

Finally, the activities are enjoyable. Students seem to think of them as games rather than work. Because of this, prediction becomes less threatening.

Prediction is an integral part of the reading process. It is a way of seeking meaning by reducing uncertainty. As Goodman says, "Skill in reading involves not greater precision, but more accurate first guesses" (1967, p. 132). Making the classroom reading environment comfortable and non-threatening, providing appropriate materials, and encouraging predicting through activities can help to build more confident, fluent, and satisfied readers.

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PUPPETRY: A WAY OF IMPROVING LANGUAGE SKILLS

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Puppetry is a medium that is fun and exciting for children as well as a medium for developing competence in language. The language skills of reading, speaking, listening, and writing are all intertwined. The children must read and reread their parts both silently and orally as well as listen to themselves and others perform. If they are creating their own scripts, they are writing, revising, organizing, and evaluating. The children are constantly communicating and interacting with one another.

Also, puppetry is a blend of the arts which includes directing, acting, and producing as well as creating and designing puppets, costumes, scenery, and props. In addition to puppetry as an art and as a medium for language competence both impressive and expressive, children are provided opportunities for developing emotionally through role-playing, as well as being provided opportunities for problem-solving.

My interest in puppetry first developed when I became aware of a need for a more holistic approach to teaching. I also observed that my third graders were constantly dramatizing using their hands, bodies, and props to perform their simple antics. For example, whenever I dictated spelling words in sentences pointing out multiple meanings of words, and whenever I read literature to them, it was an invitation to the children to perform. Thus, I decided to harness this dramatic energy in a more holistic manner and implemented a puppetry project incorporating the following overlapping steps.

STEP 1: MOTIVATION. To embark on this exciting adventure, a puppet center was created with books, sample puppets, directions for making simple puppets. Materials such as paper scraps, fabric, egg cartons, cardboard, paper bags, yarn, buttons,

magic markers, scissors, paste, staplers, and paint were provided to stimulate imaginations. When I used a paper bag puppet to teach lessons and give directions, the children related spontaneously to the puppet as a character separate from me. Following directions in a book about finger puppets, several children served as a catalyst for the other children to become actively involved. Motivation was definitely not a problem.

STEP 2: MAKING SIMPLE PUPPETS. From the finger puppets, we graduated to paper bag puppets. I tried to create an atmosphere of freedom by encouraging the children to be inventive and different. The children responded with some marvelous monsters and lovely ladies. Papier mache puppets were then sculptured in the art center under the direction of the two art teachers. The puppets were placed in the window to dry and their very presence entertained us.

STEP 3: CHARACTERIZATION. The children were assigned the task of observing people in school, on the street, and on television. They were to observe the way people talked, walked, used gestures and movement as well as to observe emotional states. The children shared and imitated their observations freely in the context of the group, but when singled out to demonstrate a behavior, many suddenly acquired an attack of stage fright.

STEP 4: MANIPULATION OF VOICE AND PUPPET. The children did research in the puppetry books and learned that their performances were more effective if they tried to synchronize their voices with the movements of their puppets. They became proficient in speaking syllables as well as words. To play the role of a baby, or the role of an old person, the children practiced changing the pitch and tone of their voices, often becoming so engrossed with their voices that they would forget to manipulate their puppets. To help them with this problem, they tape recorded their lines and played them back as they practiced manipulating their puppets.

STEP 5 EXERCISES.

a. Rhyming words, homonyms, synonyms, riddles, and jokes. The children worked in pairs, alternating roles, and audience participation was incorporated. See Step 6.
b. Spelling bees. The children formed two teams with their puppets. This was a marvelous exercise because they not only had fun but learned their words proficiently.
c. Parts of speech. We began with adjectives and nouns. The children formed two lines with one line of children speaking the adjective and the other line of children speaking the noun. The adjectives and nouns were not placed in any particular order, and as a result, the effects were often amusing with the children expressing the desire to repeat the exercise over and over again. We then graduated to action verbs which gave them an opportunity to exercise some ingenuity in manipulating their puppets as well as gaining a deeper understanding of word functions.

STEP 6: AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION. Enthusiasm and excitement reigned and standards for good listening and behavior needed to be developed with the children. At the beginning there appeared to be little awareness of the responsibilities of the audience either by performers or spectators. Techniques for increasing interest and encouraging audience involvement were used. One puppeteer would tell a joke or riddle, and another puppeteer would pretend he/she did not understand and ask for a clarification. In other instances, a puppeteer would ask someone in the audience (at times a planted participant) to explain the riddle or joke. Side conversations with the audience was another technique used.

STEP 7: DRAMATIZING. Folktales and fables such as the "Tortoise and the Hare" and "The Lion and the Mouse" were good beginnings for dramatizations because they had action, were short, and lent themselves easily to the task of composing simple dialogue. A few other very short plays were performed by groups of children as well as a few original productions, but because of time limitations this aspect was not fully developed.

Evaluation was an on-going process in terms of how the children could improve characterization, motions, voices, props, or scripts. The children were interested participants as well as initiators in every aspect of this puppetry project. I have concluded that puppetry is a successful holistic strategy for developing competence in language.

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IMPROVING THE USEFULNESS OF STANDARDIZED READING TEST SCORES

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Each year children in America take a multitude of standardized tests. In fact, standardized tests are the most widely used tests in the country (Porter, 1983). Each year we spend over 40 million dollars on standardized tests (Resnick, 1981). Yet teachers' reactions to standardized tests are mixed. For example, 84 percent of the teachers in a national sample felt that standardized test scores could be biased and misleading, yet 90 percent still felt that standardized tests could be useful if not used in isolation (National Education Association, 1980). Similarly, 92 percent of the teachers sampled in California were against the use of standardized tests, but 80 percent said they could not teach effectively without them (Takeuchi, 1977). Moreover, teachers have consistently criticized standardized tests for failing to provide diagnostic information that matches their curriculum (Goslin, 1976; Madaus, 1981; Salmon-Cox, 1981).

In view of teachers' ambivalent attitudes towards standardized tests and their desire for better diagnostic information, what can be done to improve the usefulness of standardized test reports? In order to answer this question, we first need to examine what information current reporting does provide. Typially, when students take achievement tests such as the California Achievement Test or the Metropolitan Achievement Test, their scores on these tests are returned in the form of percentile, stanine, and/or grade equivalent scores. These scores are rankings of the student in relation to a norm group. For example, a third-grade student may rank at the 35th percentile in reading achievement when compared to a representative sample of third-graders across the country. But although a student's ranking when compared to a norm group is interesting information, teachers in a study by Salmon-Cox (1981) indicated that such information

was not as important for instructional decisions as their own observation of the child's performance. What these teachers wanted from test reports was diagnostic information.

How can the typical standardized test reports be modified to supply the kind of information teachers want? In studies with reading achievement test reports, Singer and Dreher (1982, 1983) found that instead of the typical test reports, teachers much preferred receiving numerical score information supplemented with examples of the items on the test that students could read and comprehend successfully. When a numerical test score was accompanied by the hardest item the student was able to complete successfully on the test, teachers felt they had a much better understanding of how a student could perform in reading. In other words, teachers find standardized test reports much more useful in instruction when they can obtain test reports which provide content examples of how the student can perform. Knowledge of how a student ranks is not as useful diagnostically as content examples (Singer & Dreher, 1982, 1983).

Content example information can be supplied. A child's test report can routinely include the hardest item he or she is able to complete successfully. If necessary, teachers can get this information by asking that test booklets be returned to them after they are scored. However, these reports can be produced more efficiently if school systems program their computers to generate them. The most serious problem to overcome is that of securing permission from test publishers to release items in test reports. With truth-in-testing laws, this problem should become easier to surmount. But if it remains a difficulty, substitute items, which parallel the actual items, can be used instead.

In short, the usefulness to teachers of standardized reading test scores can be improved if examples of the actual items the students can read and comprehend are included along with usual numerical scores. Such test score reporting supplies teachers with diagnostic information that provides a clearer picture of how their students are performing.

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EARLY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES IN KINDERGARTEN AND SUBSEQUENT THIRD GRADE READING ACHIEVEMENT

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In an attempt to provide successful early learning experiences for children and to minimize their chances of academic failure, there is a continuing effort among educators to determine when children are ready to read and whether they have the cognitive, perceptual, linguistic, sensory, and motor capabilities considered necessary for optimal learning. The investigation of screening and assessment programs designed to identify children who may have problems learning to read is a major part of this effort. Accurate screening instruments could be extremely valuable in reducing the frequency and intensity of reading problems by identifying these children and by providing the basis for determining instructional strategies.

The county with which this researcher is affiliated has a unique early identification program which had not been studied in its entirety. Therefore, an investigation of the long-term predictability of the readiness program in Baltimore Country (MD) was undertaken. The program has two major components. At the beginning of the kindergarten year the Maryland Systematic Teacher Observation Instrument (MSTOI) is administered, and at the end of the school year the Metropolitan Readiness Tests (MRT) and Teacher Judgement ratings are administered. The use of the MSTOI, a structured teacher observation checklist, is mandated throughout the state of Maryland for the purpose of identifying children with potential learning problems and as the basis for planning programs for these children. The MRT and the Teacher Judgement ratings are mandated county-wide as a further implementation of the early identification process. The results of these instruments are utilized in program designation, special services, and further disability testing.

RELATED RESEARCH

There are various methods of assessing the reading readiness skills of children and predicting their subsequent reading achievement prior to their entrance into first grade. These include standardized readiness tests, group intelligence tests, teacher checklists or behavior rating scales, and readiness batteries. There have been many predictive studies using these various types of measures.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

One of the most popular standardized readiness tests is the Metropolitan Readiness Test (MRT) (Maitland & Nadeau, 1974), which was developed in 1933 and was revised in 1949, 1964, and 1976. In studies of earlier editions of the MRT there appears to be a consensus as to its effectiveness as a predictor of first, second, and/or third grade reading success or failure (Bolig & Fletcher, 1973; Lessler & Bridges, 1973; Randel, Fry, & Ralls, 1977). In comparison with other readiness measures, the MRT was determined to be the best single predictor of first and second grade performance. The findings of Nagle's (1979) study of the latest edition of this test concurred.

TEACHER JUDGMENTS

Kindergarten teachers are generally the first academic professionals to evaluate the child and are, therefore, in a position to make judgments as to the child's readiness skills (Ferinden, Jacobson, & Linden, 1970; Haring & Ridgeway, 1967). Teacher judgment as a basis for predicting academic success or failure is an alternative to prediction from test scores (Badian, 1976). Research supports the conclusion that teacher judgments of children's reading readiness status are reliable indicators of readiness (Cowgill, Friedland & Shapiro, 1973; Ferinden, Jacobson & Linden, 1970; Haring & Ridgeway, 1967; Henig, 1949; Kermoian, 1962).

QUESTIONS

This study investigated the relationships between the early identification procedures utilized

in Baltimore County and subsequent third grade reading achievement. Specifically, these questions about the readiness tests were asked:

1. What are the relationships between the MSTOI, the MRT, and Teacher Judgment ratings and subsequent reading achievement as measured by the third grade California Achievement Tests (CAT) Reading total?
2. What is the optimum subset of independent variables relating to the third grade California Achievement Tests (CAT) Reading total?

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The study involved 150 randomly selected students who had obtained a scholastic ability score of 90 or above on the Otis-Lennon Test of Mental Abilities taken in the fall of the second grade. For each student in the study the following data, as recorded on school records, were collected: 1) raw scores for each area and the total for the MSTOI; 2) MRT category scores; 3) teacher judgement category scores; and 4) a total CAT grade equivalent score for grade three.

Zero order correlations and multiple linear regressions were employed to answer the research questions. The percentage of variation in the CAT Reading total scores which were uniquely predictable from the independent variables was obtained. The F test was used to determine the significance of the predictions. The data were analyzed statistically with significance defined minimally at the .05 level.

The diagnostic measures employed in this study were:

The Metropolitan Readiness Tests, Level II, Form P.
The MRT is a group-administered test designed to assess a student's level of development in readiness skills important in beginning reading and mathematics. The test is divided into four areas which measure auditory, visual, language, and quantitative skills.
The Maryland Systematic Teacher Observation Instrument: This instrument, developed by the

State Department of Education, measures a child's level of development in the areas of psychomotor, sensory perception, language, cognition, and affect motivation. Teachers observe the children for approximately eight weeks and then rate the students individually on each of the test items.

Teacher Judgment Ratings: These ratings are based upon an informal checklist developed by Baltimore County and measure a child's development in auditory, visual, and language skills. Each child is rated High, Average, or Needs Help in each area. These levels correspond to stanines 1-3, 4-6, and 7-9 on the MRT levels. The teacher ratings are determined prior to the administration of the MRT.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major findings of this study indicate:

1) All of the predictor variables correlated significantly at the .05 level with the CAT Reading total scores except for the MSTOI Psychomotor subtest. The highest correlation (r = .48) was between the MRT Auditory factor and the CAT Reading total. Nagle (1979) found the Auditory factor of the MRT to have the highest correlation of any area of the MRT with first grade reading achievement. Comparable correlations of test scores and Teacher Judgment concur with the findings of Ferinden, Jacobs & Linden (1970) and Kermoian (1962). The simple correlations (r) between the predictors and the CAT are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Simple Correlations of the MSTOI, MRT, and Teacher Judgments with the CAT Reading Total Scores

Variables	r	r^2
MSTOI Total	.33*	.11
MSTOI Psychomotor	.15	.02
MSTOI Sensory	.39*	.15
MSTOI Language	.31*	.10
MSTOI Cognition	.31*	.10
MSTOI Affect/Motivation	.20*	.04
MRT Auditory	.48*	.2304
MRT Visual	.22*	.0484
MRT Language	.31*	.0961
Teacher Judgment Auditory	.45*	.2025
Teacher Judgment Visual	.30*	.0900
Teacher Judgment Language	.34*	.1156
Teacher Judgment Motor	.35*	.1225

* statistically significant at .05 level

2) Intercorrelations among the MRT factors were low, which would indicate that they are relatively independent of each other. Correlations among the MSTOI subtests were high, as were the intercorrelations among the Teacher Judgment areas. The high intercorrelations among the predictors reduced their unique contribution to the prediction equation (Table 2).

Table 2

Intercorrelations Among All of the Predictors

	MSTOI					
	TOTAL	PSYCHOMOTOR	SENSORY	LANGUAGE	COGNITION	AFFECT MOTOR
MSTOI Total						
Psychomotor	.78	-	-	-	-	-
Sensory/ Perception	.77	.52	-	-	-	-
Language	.90	.70	.71	-	-	-
Cognition	.84	.61	.68	.80	-	-
Affect/ Motivation	.80	.58	.44	.55	.54	-
MRT Auditory	.27	.07	.24	.20	.18	.24
Visual	.26	.21	.20	.21	.13	.26
Language	.26	.10	.21	.26	.22	.17
Teacher Judgment						
Auditory	.45	.23	.44	.43	.42	.30
Visual	.50	.43	.41	.46	.41	.37
Language	.54	.38	.44	.56	.47	.36
Motor	.47	.33	.40	.42	.39	.35

(cont. next page)

Table 2 (cont.)

PROFILE

	MRT			TEACHER JUDGEMENT		
	AUDITORY	VISUAL	LANGUAGE	AUDITORY	VISUAL	LANGUAGE
MSTOI Total						
Psychomotor						
Sensory/ Perception						
Language						
Cognition						
Affect/ Motivation						
MRT Auditory	-	-	-	-	-	-
Visual	.30	-	-	-	-	-
Language	.33	.31	-	-	-	-
Teacher Judgment						
Auditory	.43	.21	.23	-	-	-
Visual	.25	.30	.17	.67	-	-
Language	.32	.21	.24	.73	.69	-
Motor	.23	.32	.27	.48	.61	.49

3) The optimal subset of independent variables as determined by multiple linear regression is the MRT Auditory, the MSTOI Sensory/Perception, and the Teacher Judgment Auditory. As reported in Table 3, these three predictors comprise approximately 34% of the 36.69% explained variance of the CAT Reading total, with 23% of this contributed by the MRT Auditory factor. Even though the areas of the MRT, the MSTOI, and the Teacher Judgment ratings do not add significantly to the prediction equation, their value as indicators of potential problems in other areas of reading cannot be overlooked.

Table 3

Contribution of Independent Variables to Prediction Equation

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO VARIATION IN READING BY VARIABLE
MRT Auditory	23.04%
MSTOI Sensory	7.83%
Teacher Judgment Auditory	3.12%
MRT Language	1.58%
MSTOI Psychomotor	0.56%
Teacher Judgment Visual	0.29%
MSTOI Cognitive	0.14%
MSTOI Affect/Motivation	0.11%
MRT Visual	0.02%
MSTOI Total	0.00%
MSTOI Language	0.00%
Teacher Judgment Language	0.00%
Total	36.69% = R^2

IMPLICATIONS

This battery correlated significantly with third grade reading ahievement; however, it must be remembered that there is a portion of the variance which is unexplained. Among the twelve variables investigated, the MRT Auditory, the MSTOI Sensory, and the Teacher Judgment Auditory were the optimal predictors of third grade reading achievement. These sub-areas, therefore, could be used as a practical screening device for identifying children who may experience difficulties in reading.

Often, the abundance of information available to first grade teachers is overwhelming and is not used maximally. If teachers and school administrators focused their attention upon these three sub-areas, they could have a possible means of screening children with potential reading problems. Careful observations by the classroom teacher could then determine if further testing seemed appropriate.

Also, in schools with transient populations, it might not be possible to administer an entire

readiness battery. The three identified sub-areas could conceivably be used as an abbreviated pre-reading index. This abbreviated procedure would not be a replacement for a total assessment battery, but it could serve as an indicator for identifying children with possible reading problems and as a guide to further assessment. For those situations in which time considerations are even further limited, the MRT Auditory could suffice.

No matter how the results of early identification instruments are utilized, caution must be exercised to ensure that the findings are not used to label children. It is recommended that initial identification be followed by individual evaluation before instructional decisions are made about children.

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READINESS TESTS: WHAT DO THEY REALLY ASSESS?

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At approximately two years of age, children enter into what Piaget (1977) has called the preoperational stage of development, a stage characterized in part by the ability to think about past events, and objects that are no longer in view. As a consequence of this symbolic development, children began to imitate, to draw, to speak, and to "read". Virtually all task analyses of the reading skill (Gibson, 1968; Carroll, 1970) acknowledge that the child must first know a language to read. For Piaget, this acquisition is made possible by the representational development which signals the transition between sensorimotor and preoperational knowing. It is also acknowledged that reading requires the competence to dissect spoken words into sounds; to decode graphemes to phonemes; to process more than one letter at a time; to process in left to right and up to down order; to know that written words are analogous to spoken words; to recognize words from such cues as configuration of letters, parts of the word, word context, and probabilities; and to reason, think, make inferences about what is decoded. A main implication of Piaget's theory is that the competence to do all these things rests upon the concrete operations developmental stage which has had the undergirding of the sensorimotor area (Piaget, 1970). In a review of all these early interrelationships of neurophysiological factors as they are related to early reading, it becomes apparent that certain developmental patterns are critical, in fact they are considered a part of the child's "reading readiness" (Natchez, 1968).

Durkin (1970) proposes a very sensible and realistic definition of readiness which she borrows from the work of Ausubel (1959)-- readiness is "... the adequacy of existing capacity in relation to the given demands of a given learning task".

In view of that definition, a test in that area would serve two purposes: (1) prediction of readiness for reading instruction and to a degree, (2) diagnosis of deficiencies of specific skills that are prerequisites for reading (Carducci-Balchazy, 1978). The specific skills needed in this area are cognitive, linguistic, auditory, visual and motor processing skills (Muehl & DiNello, 1976; Wallace & Larsen, 1979).

A review of reading readiness instruments reveals that the perceptual skill areas that are included on the majority of the tests are visual discrimination, numerical concepts, fine motor skills, auditory discrimination, language-vocabulary, knowledge of letters, laterality, spatiality, knowledge of colors, and general information. Hammell and McNutt (1981) used median r's from three or more research studies to rank skill areas in a similar fashion. Their ranking is numerical concepts, knowledge of letters, auditory discrimination, general information, visual discrimination, spatial relationships, language, laterality, and motor skills.

A brief overview of these skills and authorities that espouse evidence of these skills as an indicator of the child's maturation process in the area of readiness follows.

NUMERICAL CONCEPTS

The inclusion of this relatively simple item is sometimes computed separately from the overall reading readiness score. This information is useful as it measures the more abstract reasoning ability of the child. Piaget stressed the fact that a child must reach the operational level of thinking before he can be expected to understand the concept of number (Gibson, 1978).

VISUAL DISCRIMINATION

Samuels (1973) reviewed much of the research on failure in beginning reading. Among his conclusions is "...poor reading is associated with inferior visual discrimination". Pick (1970) also felt there was a need in this area.

AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION

In auditory discrimination Samuels (1973) takes an opposing view when he states, "The literature on auditory discrimination and reading leads one to conclude that in the absence of frank sensory impairment reading difficulty is probably not strongly associated with lack of auditory discrimination". Dykstra (1966) would agree with him.

Mason (1981) in the contrary, contends that there is scant support to the notion that six year olds do not have enough auditory discrimination to learn phonics. Other researchers in this area contend that auditory discrimination ability is an important component of reading readiness (Calfee, Lindamoor & Lindamood, 1973; Monroe, 1932; Wepman, 1960). Witkin (1969) concluded that performance on auditory discrimination influenced by other skills such as auditory memory span and intelligence.

AUDITORY AND VISUAL DISCRIMINATION

Some researchers (Whiton, Singer & Cook, 1975) believe it is a combination of an "audiovisual cross-sensory task" that serves as the best indicator for beginning reading. Supporting evidence comes from studies indicating that measures of cross-sensory skills correlate significantly with reading achievement at various grade levels (Birch & Belmont, 1964, 1965; Berry, 1967; Reilly, 1971). Birch and Belmont (1964) have stressed the importance of auditory-to-visual sense integration in learning to read. Using this conceptual framework one can analyze the beginning reading process with respect to the child's need to make four different kinds of auditory and visual sensory integrations. Auditory discriminations require the child to order and relate sound patterns organized on a temporal basis. Visual discriminations require the child to order and relate graphic patterns organized on a spatial basis. Preparatory to reading the child must relate auditory patterns in speech, which are temporarily ordered, to the spatially ordered visual patterns in print. To actually read, he must reverse the process by responding to the printed visual patterns with .pa appropriate sound sequences of his language in his own vocabulary (Huehl & Kremenak, 1966).

KNOWLEDGE OF THE ALPHABET

Letter name knowledge is another factor that has been investigated in relationship to reading readiness and is often included as a part of the assessment. Chall (1967) found that in correlating seventeen studies (from 1938 to 1963) on knowledge of letters and reading achievement, the child's ability to identify letters by name in kindergarten or first grade is an important predictor of reading achievement. Without exception naming letters proved to be the best single predictor either in simple or multiple prediction. In three other studies (Silvaroli, 1965; Lowell, 1971; and Bond & Dykstra, 1967), the authors concluded that the letter naming test alone was not only the best predictor among readiness tests, but also that additional measures added little of significance to the prediction. In long term prediction, Bagford (1968) found that letter naming had the highest simple correlation in predicting reading in grades four through six. Although this factor is easily tested (and easy to include in a readiness test), research also illustrates that direct instruction in letter names did not improve achievement in beginning reading (Ohnmacht, 1969; Samuels, 1971, 1972). It would appear that an integration of many skills is being measured and the evidence of the child's maturation level is evidenced by his ability to recognize and decode the alphabet (Chall, 1967; Hiebert, 1981).

MOTOR SKILLS

Motor skill assessment overlaps previously named modalities just as any assessment in those areas draw upon motor skill development. Infant checklists and tests use this area as it is the most indicative of the young child's maturation level.

Very few of the group readiness tests assess gross motor skills, and fine motor skills. Specialized tests in the visual-motor area are generally used if a child's lag in readiness is suspected to originate in this area. Information on some specialized tests in the visual-motor area follows.

The Developmental Test of Visual Perception (Frostig, 1966) has been used as a readiness instrument and the relationship between it and later reading achievement was shown by Leibert and Sherk (1970), Ohrmacht and Olsen (1968), and Olson (1966). Hammill (1971) and Leeds (1970) showed the Metropolitan Readiness Test as a better predictor. The instrument measures what it was designed to do as shown by a study of improved perceptual skills that was done by Jacobs, Wirthlin, and Miller (1968).

The Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test has been a component of many reading readiness tests (Ilg, 1968). The ability to draw a recognizable human figure does show relationship to reading achievement according to Panther (1967). This test was first a measure of intelligence in 1926 (Harris, 1963), whereas moderate correlations have been found between draw-a-person (DAP) and intelligence, the latter is usually underestimated by the test (Ritter, Duffy, & Fischman, 1974). Dunn (1967) showed that spatial perception and functional motoric concepts related significantly to this ability but the ability to draw a person did not relate to academic achievement.

A similar instrument, the Koppitz-Human Figure Drawing (HFD) has been used as a technique to identify academically not-ready kindergarteners (Dunleavy et al., 1981). In both these instruments it would appear that the concepts or ideas trapped in the drawing relate to the concrete operations that make up more complex concepts. According to Piaget, it is the action rather than the perception that becomes the primary source of knowledge (Kolls, 1980).

VOCABULARY/LANGUAGE

Language and vocabulary are other frequently assessed areas in the group readiness tests. The language development and facility of the child are one large factor. A child with a small and imperfect speaking vocabulary can hardly be expected to do much reading (Lee & Lee, 1940; Wilt, 1968). During their first year infants acquire language at an astounding rate and in so doing learn many of the basic skills for reading if this early exposure to

books, words and language is continued (Lamme, 1980). Prereading language programs have focused largely on the oral language system (Goolsby, 1968). This strategy implies that the process of learning to read involves transfer from auditory to visual signals after oral language competency has been established. Several investigators have suggested that deficiencies in perceptual skills may be key elements in the irreversible language deficiencies of many disadvantaged children (Tyler, 1956). Furthermore, Hunt (1961) has suggested that perceptual activities may enable the child's central processes to develop so that language can occur. This is consistent with the view of Inhelder and Piaget (1964) that effective early enrichment procedures should consider the highly interactive relationship which exists between seriation (perception) and classification (language) functions.

SUMMARY

Reading Readiness Tests can be most useful if they are an integral part of a well integrated school program. A standardized test (as opposed to an inventory) does allow comparison of children in a classroom (Bates, 1979). The information derived from such tests is not individualized or personalized and may not be a good indicator of the child's desire to learn. Readiness is not one thing. In fact the variety of abilities in kind and amount which make up readiness should be termed "readinesses". Also what makes one child ready for reading might be different from what makes another child ready.

Other areas to be critically examined are (1) how valid are the identifying or predictive measures? (2) what are the implications of diagnostic data for remediation? (Keogh & Becker, 1975) (3) does it effectively measure the "perceptual age" of the child? Perceptual age would be the time at which the child is neurophysically ready for abstract or cause and effect thinking (Warner & Rosenberg, 1977).

In all of the "special" tests which may be utilized to further assess suspected areas there is a caution that accompanies them. Perceptual tests that measure attentional and discrimination

repertoires do not constitute this type of independent evidence. Although particular "perceptual" behaviors may be necessary before the child will learn to read readily, the "perceptual" behaviors are learned also (Staats, 1968). Standardized tests do serve a function, however, in revealing where the child stands in relationship to his age group and whether or not he is performing specific tasks at the rate one would predict for his performance in other areas. The weakness of such tests, however, is that they fall short of telling why a child fails a task. They tell you only that he fails (Wolman, 1978).

Perhaps one of the greatest concerns in reading readiness research is predicting the success of young children in beginning to learn to read (Ricker, 1978). The major reason for this concern is the desire to make reading instruction effective. If prediction is accurate, and children can be placed in appropriate situations before formal instruction begins, the frustration, boredom, and socially maladaptive behaviors which so often accompany inappropriate reading instruction can be avoided (Wolman, 1978).

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THE MARYLAND CORRECTIONAL TRAINING CENTER: A MODEL PROGRAM

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At the Maryland Correctional Training Center (MCTC), a medium security state prison, a reading clinic was established in September 1982. The purpose of this article is to familiarize you with the MCTC Reading Clinic by discussing the teacher's role, student assessment, and the approach/methods by which reading can be taught to adult illiterates.

From September 1980 through August 1982, thirteen teachers from MCTC and the Maryland Correctional Institute were enrolled in the Masters of Science - Reading program through Johns Hopkins University. As part of that program, techniques were taught for one-to-one tutoring of adult illiterates and these techniques were applied while working with inmate participants. An outgrowth of this master's degree program was the establishment of the MCTC Reading Clinic by three reading specialists who completed the Johns Hopkins program.

THE TEACHER'S ROLE

The teacher within the Reading Clinic is not a classroom manager nor a dispenser of instructional routines, but is a facilitator and guide (Smith, 1978). This teacher has a crucial role in helping students learn to read by modifying circumstances, stimulating students' interests, and making reading meaningful to a degree that formal instructional programs cannot be expected to achieve (Smith, 1978). It is this underlying view which maintains and contributes to the success of the reading clinics "behind bars".

To promote this philosophy, the teacher assumes various roles within and outside the classroom. Outside the classroom, the teacher acts as a diagnostician by assessing and screening

participants and then prescribing individualized programs of study. The teacher acts as a counselor outside the classroom by building initial rapport and scheduling participants. On occasion, the teacher acts as college instructor by training and imparting knowledge to tutor/aides. Frequently the teacher is called to assume a supervisory role by managing the program and physical surroundings, by evaluating and supervising daily instruction, and by obtaining and distributing necessary supplies and materials. Often the teacher plays the role of consultant by conferring with special education coordinators and other teachers, as well as tutors, with emphasis on purposeful reading. The teacher acts as librarian/media specialist by supplying and maintaining abundant resources and reading materials for the clinic. Most importantly, the teacher acts as a reading specialist by coordinating and prescribing programs for participants.

Within the classroom, the teacher acts as leader by providing special insight, experiences, and training. Also, the teacher acts as leader by providing the atmosphere of quiet confidence and relaxation required so that learning can take place (Stauffer, Abrams, & Pilulski, 1978). The teacher needs to be a coordinator by creating situations where physical and mental actions take place and by allowing the combined efforts of head, heart, and hand to contribute to learning (Martorella, 1977). In addition to being a counselor outside the classroom, the reading teacher needs to be a counselor within the classroom by monitoring reactions of participants and tutors, by dealing with interactional problems, by dealing with personal problems, and by building self-esteem through success and shared experiences. The teacher acts as information giver by imparting the right kind of information at the right time and the right place. Daily, the teacher acts as facilitator by guiding and interpreting information for meaning from the reading situations. Frequently the teacher acts as tester by continued assessment of participants' needs and progress by direct observation, homemade tests and modality assessment instruments, not by administering test instruments for further classifying and screening of participants (Smith, 1978). The teacher acts as persuader by persuading students to read what they would like to read (Smith, 1978), and demonstrator,

by showing reading as being useful, meaningful, and having purpose in the participants' lives (Smith, 1978). Most importantly, the teacher is a reading instructor by identifying a particular student's need or interest or difficulty at a particular time, and then deciding on how and when to use specific methods and materials (Smith, 1978), by modifying circumstances, methods, and materials in an attempt to make the reading instruction meaningful (Smith, 1978), by overcoming negative attitudes and low motivation through a successful school environment resulting in intensified individualized instruction (Stauffer, Abrams, & Pilulski, 1978), by making our students feel important, that their thoughts and ideas are of value, and that they can do things and make decisions (Stauffer, Abrams, & Pilulski, 1978), and by providing the atmosphere, knowledge, and skill to impart unto the tutors and participants the most valued lesson we have to offer: the acquired ability to think -- to inquire -- and to seek answers through reading.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS

At MCTC, adults are placed into, and advanced through, the school program on the basis of their achievement scores on the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT). Those men whose average score is below 5.0 grade level on the achievement test are placed into the Basic program. Before being scheduled for reading, these men are screened for placement into the MCTC Reading Clinic. This screening consists of the Daniels Word Recognition, Johns Hopkins Informal Reading Inventory, and the Verbal Opposites subtest of the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude. Any man scoring below 2.0 on the Daniels Word Recognition and/or Johns Hopkins Informal Reading Inventory is placed in the Reading Clinic. The auding part of the Johns Hopkins Informal Reading Inventory and the Verbal Opposites is used as an indicator of the participant's immediate potential. If warranted, either during the initial assessment or at a later date, based on classroom observation/evaluation, men are given modality and processing evaluation by instruments including the Gates Associative Learning Test and the Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude. In addition, psychological, auditory, and visual testing are available for those men needing further assessment.

THE READING CLINIC

New tutors are trained for the Reading Clinic every seven weeks and placed on an approved tutor list. These tutors are required to possess a high school diploma or GED certificate. They are then given one week of intense training in the following methods: Language Experience Approach (LEA), Directed Listening Language Experience Approach (DL-LEA), Directed Reading Activities (DRA), Fernald, Word Attack Skills, and Comprehension Skills. After being assigned to the Clinic, tutors meet once a day for one hour to review methods and plan the next day's activities, as well as to discuss problems which may have arisen. Tutors are assigned to two (2) participants for a total of four (4) hours work in the Clinic per day. Tutors are paid a small stipend; this is not a volunteer program. Following is an outline of tutor orientation and training.

Tutor Orientation and Training

I. Background
   A. Evolution of lab
   B. Characteristics of adult illiterates
   C. Function of tutor

II. Remediation
   A. Language Experience Approach (LEA) and modification of
      - purpose
      - technique
      - practice
   B. Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA)
   C. Sight Word Instruction
      1. Fernald method (VAKT)
         - purpose
         - technique
         - practice
      2. Finger spelling
      3. Structural analysis (roots and affixes)
      4. Picture/word association
      5. Mneumonic devices

   D. Word Attack Instruction
      1. Phonetic analysis
         a. consonant sounds
         b. phonograms (rhyming)
         c. multi-syllable words

2. Structural analysis (roots and affixes)
3. Contextual analysis
4. Semantic categorization

E. Comprehension
1. Literal (5 W's and H)
2. Inferential
3. Critical

F. Application of Learning

G. Follow-up
1. Semantic categorization and word recognition
2. Word attack
3. Comprehension
4. Application (transfer)

H. Weekly Summary

The MCTC Reading Clinic meets for three two-hour sessions daily Monday through Friday. Monitoring of the Clinic is accomplished by three reading specialists, each serving two consecutive hours in the Clinic daily. Instruction is provided by tutors on a one-to-one basis. Upon entry into the program, the participant writes a Picture-LEA based on a Polaroid snapshot taken in the Clinic (Oliastro, 1979). This first story builds rapport and locates an interest the student has. Later the Picture-LEA is displayed on the bulletin board. Once a participant's interest is established, LEA or DL-LEA stories are generated around this theme. General lesson structure is provided by the following outline.

MONDAY- Story

LEA story
Unknown Words
Dictionary
VAKT (others)
Word Bank
Plans for Tuesday's session

TUESDAY- Word Study

Review New Vocabulary
Semantic Word Study
Phonics (relate to Word Bank)
Review Vocabulary Used in Phonics
Context Usage
Re-read LEA Story

WEDNESDAY- Comprehension

Format:	Illustrations Punctuation
Meanings:	Synonyms, Antonyms, Homonyms Prefixes and Suffixes Context Clues
Questions:	Main Idea Details Sequence Vocabulary Inference/Synthesis
Skills:	(one a week) Facts Main Idea Following Directions Drawing Conclusions Detecting Sequence Locating Answers Working with Sounds Using Context Clues

THURSDAY- Follow-up (Review)

Vocabulary:	Sight Word Attack
Comprehension:	5 W's and How
Transfer Activity	

FRIDAY- Recreational Reading

Choose from:
Neurological Impress Method (NIM)
Participant's LEA Stories
Other Participant's LEA Stories
Reader on Participant's Level
Material Brought by Student

Occasionally, men are allowed to work on DRA when reading materials on their instructional level and interest level are available; Word Study, Comprehension, and Review are then based on these DRA stories.

CONCLUSION

Using a variety of techniques, coupled with intensive formal and informal assessment within the Reading Clinic, the reading program's offerings at

MCTC have been greatly enhanced. Though it is too early to assess statistical gains, overall group self-esteem and feeling of worth are evident, and individual progress, whether academic or experiential, in many cases is phenomenal. Many participants have substantially increased sight vocabulary (from less than 25 to 200-300 words) and are now ready to begin Language Experience Approach stories. Others who started on Language Experience Approach stories are now working on Directed Listening Language Experience Approach stories and Directed Reading Activities. Since the opening of the Clinic in September 1982, 48 students have begun the course and there are presently 33 men enrolled. Physical facilities have been enlarged. In the near future, we hope to begin a pre-vocational segment of the lab for the lower spectrum participants who have little potential, as assessed by their psychological testing.

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A SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM FOR ABLE READERS: DEVELOPING ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

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Organizational skills usually include notetaking, outlining, and summarizing. Another organizational skill which appears to receive less attention in the literature but is extremely important to daily survival in the classroom is the maintenance of a notebook. Some readers may react by thinking, "How elementary! So basic!" but those of us who have worked with unorganized students, be they gifted or remedial, recognize what an important beginning this notebook can be to the development of the other organizational skills. The link between organization and intelligence has been accepted by many scholars in the field. When information is organized by an individual in an intelligent fashion, "positive results accrue academically to that person," (Hafner, 1977).

The purpose of this article is to describe how a student notebook was used as an instructional tool to help students practice skills of organization. These students participated in a summer enrichment program for able readers at Mount Saint Mary's College.

PROGRAM

Each summer the Education Department at Mount Saint Mary's College sponsors an enrichment program for approximately fifty gifted students who have completed grades two through seven. Two criteria which are recommended for acceptance into the program are an IQ score of 125 or better and an achievement measure of the 8th or 9th stanine on a standardized reading comprehension test. Although students selected for this program are academically gifted, they specifically fall into the category of able readers who need special attention in reading (Trezise, 1978).

To challenge these able readers, a theme was selected that fostered critical and creative reading as well as research and study skills through a content area. Three of the student goals for the 1982 theme, "Outdoor Education: Life Beyond the Classroom," were: 1) to participate in activities that integrate language arts skills with outdoor education content; 2) to gather, analyze, and evaluate information from a variety of sources; and 3) to research and produce an original project.

Past observations of young academically gifted students have led to the conclusion that many do not possess the necessary skills that foster self-directed independent study. It is often wrongly assumed that gifted learners and organized study skills go hand in hand but, in fact, these skills primarily develop with direct teacher assistance and guidance.

NOTEBOOK

Participants in the Summer Enrichment Program were required to purchase a 3-ring loose-leaf notebook and to bring it to class every day. During the first week students were instructed how to organize the sections of their notebooks. Section dividers were labelled VOCABULARY, NOTES, FIELD LOG. PROJECT, and CALENDAR.

Under the VOCABULARY heading students kept their lists of the Word of the Day. Words relating to outdoor education were introduced each day and entered on their lists, along with a definition and original sentence. Additional vocabulary activities, such as crossword puzzles and word finds, were included in this section also.

The section labelled NOTES provided a single location for class notes. So often students scribble notes on loose sheets, stick them in a book and are unable to find them when it is time to study. Students were instructed to date each day's notes and to write an appropriate heading for the topic of discussion. In addition, note taking outlines were frequently provided to guide students in identifying main ideas and supporting details.

The FIELD LOG section differed from the previous one in that it was a compilation of notes from excursions such as a nature scavenger hunt, the edible plant hike, and specimen collecting from a creek walk. Speaker comments were filed in this section.

Papers relating to the student project were grouped together under the heading PROJECT. The initial bibliography, outline of the project, projected timelime and rough draft were all located here. This provided a quick progress check for the teachers.

The final section provided a means of continual program evaluation. It included calendars for the months of the program. Each day students were asked to write in the calendar space a one sentence summary of a new or interesting idea which they had learned that day. This was helpful information for the instructors' planning sessions.

EVALUATION

Notebooks were checked once a week for completeness, neatness, and organization. Though a letter grade was not awarded, teacher comments were written on note paper depicting a tree in various stages of foliation to incorporate the theme of outdoor education with the notebook check.

A tree covered with leaves indicated an excellent notebook - - complete and everything properly filed. A tree with falling leaves symbolized a notebook with some minor problems. Perhaps a few pages were falling out, missing or improperly filed. A notebook with serious problems received teacher comments on a note with a bare tree.

Checking the notebooks was a time-consuming activity. It was necessary that each team of teachers keep a notebook that could serve as a model and "key" during the checking process.

Teacher comments were written so that students could concentrate on improving specific areas instead of trying to tackle all problems at once. The teacher needed to check the previous week's recommendations to see if they were followed. The

extent of the student's adherence to the teacher's recommendations was taken into consideration in the following week's evaluation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

What then can be said about able readers and organizational skills? First, teachers should be cautious about making assumptions about the extent of skills that gifted students possess. In this case the labels gifted and organized do not go hand-in-hand. Next the teacher might recall one of the principles of a differentiated curriculum which indicates that direct instruction should be provided "to develop independent or self-directed study skills" (National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and Talented, 1979). These skills do not infiltrate the able reader by osmosis nor are they innate skills. Third, based on the characteristics of gifted students, the teacher might expect to see a transfer of this awareness of organization to other areas such as written plans for researching and creating a project. One fifth grade boy who seemed to experience an "Aha!" when he recognized the value of an organized notebook transferred the skill to his project by making further subdivisions in that section of his notebook which he labelled: purpose, product, materials, resources, and timeline. To quote one parent, "My child shows a lot more organization. I found lists and plans for work to be done all over the house!"

Do able readers need to develop basic skills? Our observation over the past few summers indicate that they do. By integrating these basic skills with challenging content, able readers can better achieve their potential.

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TODAY'S BLACK CHILD IN THE WORLD OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

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Appealing collections of children's books reflecting the interests of today's Black children are now available for teachers to draw upon as resources. The purposes of this article are: 1. to explore the need for providing literature experiences which feature young Black children, and 2. to present an annotated bibliography which emphasizes children's literature books about Black children which are both realistic and positive.

Richardson (1974) has defined Black children's literature as "writing which deals with the Black experience ... and is aimed at the Black child, either primarily or secondarily." Larrick (1965) investigated the quantity and quality of children's books containing Black characters and concluded that Black children, prior to the mid-60's, learned to understand life through books which either omitted them entirely or scarcely mentioned them. Studies of the early 1970's were more optimistic. The percentage of books with one or more Black characters doubled from 6% in 1965 to 14% in 1979 (Chall, Radwin, French & Hall, 1979). The decade of the seventies evidenced a definite upswing in both the quantity and quality of books about Blacks. Black characters were placed in more realistic, contemporary settings and had more prominent roles in children's literature books. Perhaps the greatest reason for optimism in the decade of the eighties is that children's literature is becoming more creative and responsive to the needs of the young Black readers whom it is trying to reach.

Children's literature materials are major sources teachers rely upon to accomplish the goal of developing interest in reading. Common sense and experience dictate that children are interested in the characters with which they can identify. Toward the goal of developing interest in reading it is imperative that young Black children be exposed to books which have characters with which they can realistically identify (Davis, 1972).

There is ample support for the contention that books influence the way children view themselves. Literature can help children understand and gain insight into their own feelings. It provides an opportunity for the development of greater awareness and understanding of one's self and one's relationships with others. Many young children are in search of their own identity and feelings of self-worth. Reed (1972) suggests that young Black children can be helped in their search for a positive self-image by exposure to books presenting a wide variety of human experiences.

Even though the general availability of Black children's literature is at an all time high, less than 15% of the children's literature books published feature Black characters. Therefore, educators must consciously strive to expose children to books about Blacks which are appropriate, realistic and positive. Along with the increase in Black children's literature there has been a concurrent increase in children's books which deal with the real world of today's child. Death, divorce and other problem-centered topics which, in the past, have not been dealt with in the world of children's literature are now being dealt with in very sensitive ways. Since much of the current children's literature deals with problem-centered realism, the fact that there is a preponderance of problem-centered Black children's literature should not be surprising.

Books which deal with the realities of life can help children deal more effectively with life by enlarging their understanding of themselves and others. While problem-centered realism has a very important place in Black children's literature, so does positive-centered realism. Children should always be provided with positive hope and joy in the

midst of realism. Alexander (1970) has stated that in considering the potential of Black children's literature one does not ask that the books be "antiseptic in portraying harsh realities; one hopes that, increasingly, authors will foster awareness and sensitivity in their young readers; and, specifically, in the case of Black children, one hopes they will be helped to know better their own strength and power to bring about change."

With the popularity of the problem-centered themes in children's literature it seems important that educators provide a balance of both problem-centered and positive-centered Black children's books. Teachers can be instrumental in helping "... children at an early stage to avoid negative attitudes and behavior that have afflicted our society in the past" (Rudman, 1976). When children can identify with characters in books they learn to accept and value themselves and their heritage.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following annotated bibliography presents a number of contemporary books about young Black children which would be appropriate for use with children ranging from pre-school through elementary school age. These books were selected because they present a variety of human experiences which are dealt with in realistic and positive ways. These books can be enjoyed as they are read aloud by the teacher, displayed in the classroom library and made available for independent reading.

The bibliography is divided into two sections. The first section, Positive-Centered Realism, focuses upon books which emphasizes common everyday experiences and joy in the lives of young Black children. The second section, Problem-Centered Realism, contains references to books with life's problems as themes.

POSITIVE-CENTERED REALISM

Breinburg, Petronella. Doctor Shawn. Illustrations by Errol Lloyd. New York, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975.

A familiar childhood predicament is the basis for the appeal this story has. Shawn, his sisters,

a friend, and even the cat decide to play hospital while Mom is out shopping. Her departing words, "And don't make a mess," are all but forgotten as the staff and patients get bandaged and fed. The brightly colored pictures capture the fun and loving relationships of these true to life characters.

Breinburg, Petronella. Shawn's Red Bike. Illustrated by Errol Lloyd. Scranton, Pennsylvania: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1975.

A story about an almost universal experience: boy wants red bike. A warm and funny text in large type make this book just right for a beginning reader. The moment Shawn sees the red bicycle in the shop window he wants it. It takes Shawn a long time to save the money, but finally the big day arrives and the shiny two-wheeler is delivered. All young readers will empathize with Shawn as he copes with one of life's situations.

Caines, Jeannette. Just Us Women. Illustrated by Pat Cummings. New York, New York: Harper and Row Publishers Inc., 1982.

A summer car trip to North Carolina is planned by a young girl for herself and her Aunt Martha. Planning includes making certain that the road maps Aunt Martha has picked up and the lunches, wrapped in wax paper and packed in two shoe boxes, will not be forgotten as they were the previous year. The trip will include stopping at roadside markets and famous statues, walking in the rain, and strolling down back roads to buy ripe peaches and pick mushrooms. The contemporary life-like illustrations help to convey the aura of the warm friendship these two travelers share on this leisurely, carefree excursion.

Clifton, Lucille. Everett Anderson's Friend. Illustrated by Ann Grifalconi. New York, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1976.

Everett Anderson eagerly awaits the arrival of new neighbors. How disappointed he is when he first sees them:

"Please,
says Everett Anderson softly,
Why did they have to be
a family of
shes?"

But as all children eventually find out, Everett Anderson discovers that friends come in all shapes and sizes and some are even girls.

Cohen, Miriam. When Will I Read? Illustrated by Lillian Hoban. New York, New York: Greenwillow Books, 1977.

In this fifth book about the same group of classmates, the author and illustrator again explore a typical first-grader's concern, this time about being able to read. Jim's teacher assures him that he will learn. And through signs in the classroom, picture books, and a language experience story, he approaches his goal. At the story's conclusion he happily says: "I waited all my life. Now I can read."

Cornish, Sam. Grandmother's Pictures. Illustrated by Jeanne Johns. Scarsdale, New York: Bradbury Press, 1974.

Love transcends his grandmother's old age and poverty when a boy pays weekly visits to her apartment. Stories of the past, about happenings and family members, and an old picture album create an aura of enchantment for him. Sensitive charcoal drawings complement the poetic text.

Feelings, Tom. Daydreamers. Text by Eloise Greenfield. New York, New York: The Dial Press, 1981.

The still portraits of Tom Feelings come to life through the hauntingly expressive faces of the Black children he has rendered in pen and ink from everyday life. A child can easily find him or herself among the pages of these daydreamers.

Gray, Genevieve. Send Wendell. Illustrated by Symeon Shemin. New York, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1974.

Since the rest of the family is always "too busy," six year old Wendell does the errands all the time. Everyone else in the family is busy doing important things. Someone always says "Send Wendell when there is an errand to do." There is great excitement when Uncle Robert from California comes to visit. After Uncle Robert's visit Wendell also has something important to do. Warm, insightful illustrations which capture a loveable and loving Wendell, add to this book's charm.

Greenfield, Eloise. First Pink Light. Illustrated by Moneta Barnett. New York, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976.

The age old struggle of bedtime has a special meaning for Tyree one particular night. His father will be returning early in the morning from caring for Ty's grandmother for a month. Ty asserts himself and believes he has won when his mother allows him to sit in the big chair, in his pajamas, with his pillow and blanket to await the first pink light of day. The color pink is superbly utilized as the only color contrasted against gray in this warm and loving book.

Horvath, Betty. Jasper and the Hero Business. Illustrated by Don Bolognese. New York, New York: 1977.

One of the most asked questions posed by adults to children, "What are you going to be when you grow up?" is answered point blank by Jasper. Jasper says, "I'm going to be a hero." But how does one become a hero? Certainly not by taking out the garbage as he is told to do by his older brother. Jasper's pursuit for an opportunity to do something brave and help people leads him to construct a "hero board", where he would post newspaper stories about heroes. He leaves a space for himself, but overlooks his own heroism when it occurs.

Isadora, Rachel. Ben's Trumpet. New York, New York: Greenwillow Books, 1979.

Readers of all ages will happily become lost in this timeless tale of a young boy's dream as he pretends to play his trumpet for anyone who will listen. Rachel Isadora's pen and ink drawings use the art-deco style of the twenties to fill the pages

of this book with a collage of emotions, sights, and the sounds of jazz.

Jonas, Ann. When You Were A Baby. New York, New York: Greenwillow Books, 1982.

An enchanting book with clear, simple lines to its illustrations of objects in a child's everyday world. It contrasts what a child can't do when she or he is a baby with what a preschooler can do.

Little, Lessie Jones and Eloise Greenfield. I Can Do It By Myself. New York, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1978.

"I can do it by myself!" Conny tells his older brother, for today is his mother's birthday and he has decided to buy her a plant. He practices in front of a mirror how he is going to "stand cool" when he purchases the special plant. He forgets about the obstacles he will have to overcome to reach his destination and to return.

Prather, Ray. Double Dog Dare. New York, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1975.

You can almost hear these two kids talking as they brag and boast their way around town. Their day starts off when Eddie finds a quarter. Rudy yells "Halfers, halfers!" but Eddie replies "Nope, finders keepers! Then they get themselves in a jam, up a tree with a growling dog below. Rudy double-dog-dares Eddie to go down first, to which Eddie retorts "Darers go first." A comical ending with both boys coming out winners in the double-dog-dare. The youthful jargon and large print add to the appeal of this book.

Prather, Ray. New Neighbors. New York, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975.

When he moves into a new neighborhood with seemingly unfriendly children, Ricky hits upon a way of making friends. Boys and girls will be delighted with Ricky's imaginative idea for making friends. Any child who has ever moved into a new neighborhood and left good friends behind will identify with Ricky.

Springstubb, Tricia. The Magic Guinea Pig. Illustrated by Bari Weissman. New York, New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1982.

This funny tale is about Mark, a little boy who believes he can't do anything right. One day Mark meets a witch whose spells never work. Mark and the witch find that they can help each other. The cartoon-like drawings add a special appeal to this highly humorous book.

Steptoe, John. Daddy is a Monster Sometimes. New York, New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1980.

Bweela and her brother, Javaka, tell about their father. The everyday language of children is used to portray the feelings that, at one time, every child will experience. The humorous story is told with affection and subtlety. John Steptoe's paintings illustrate so well the monster and the love in Daddy.

Walter, Mildred Pitts. Ty's One-man Band. Illustrated by Margot Tomes. New York, New York: Four Winds Press, 1980.

This timeless lyrical story of a boy's adventure on a hot summer's day is told with great drama. Ty's boredom leads him to a meeting with an interesting stranger. Their encounter culminates in a break in the dullness for all concerned.

PROBLEM-CENTERED REALISM

Caines, Jeannette. Daddy. Illustrated by Ronald Himler. New York, New York: Harper and Row, 1977.

A Saturday visit with her Daddy is the highlight of Windy's week. His jovial affection and his new wife's happy participation make every visit a merry adventure. This story can show a child that even though parents are separated or divorced a close relationship is possible with the one who lives away.

Clifton, Lucille. Amifika. Illustrated by Thomas Di Grazia. New York, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1977.

Amifika's mother has music in her voice because his father is returning from the Army and his mother has been busily making room in their small two-room apartment. She tells her cousin that she'll "get rid of something he won't miss," something he won't remember. Could that something possibly be Amifika? After all, he doesn't remember his father; does his father remember him? Clifton and Di Grazia, through words and pictures, have illustrated the fear this character has with love and understanding that will address many children's concerns.

Clifton, Lucille. My Friend Jacob. Illustrated by Thomas Di Grazia. New York, New York: E. P. Dutton, 1980.

Sam and Jacob are neighbors and best friends, although Sam is nine years old and Jacob is seventeen. They help each other - for each has his own strengths and needs. The simple yet detailed pencil drawings enhance the sensitivity of this compelling story. Readers will enjoy this story of a very special friendship.

Clifton, Lucille. Everett Anderson's Goodbye. Illustrated by Ann Grifalconi. New York, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983.

Everett Anderson has been brought full circle with the last in the series of Everett Anderson books. The haunting drawings of Ann Grifalconi help to convey the feelings of a little boy trying to cope with the death of a loved one. We go with him as he struggles through the stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. Everett Anderson will be missed sorely by his fans of all ages.

Greenfield, Eloise. Grandmama's Joy. Illustrated by Carole Byard. New York, New York: William Collins Publishers, Inc., 1980.

This special relationship that Rhondy and her grandmother enjoy is lovingly expressed in this engaging story. One day, no matter how hard Rhondy tries to make the lines between Grandmama's eyes go away, she remains sad and quiet as she sometimes does on "one of those rainy, gray days." Finally, she has to remind her grandmother that no matter what problems they have, they will always have each

other. The love of Rhondy and her grandmother will be transmitted to all readers through sensitive charcoal drawings.

Grimes, Nikki. Something on My Mind. Illustrated by Tom Feelings. New York, New York: The Dial Press, 1978.

In a collection of poems and charcoal drawings this artist and author deftly captures Black city children's particular concerns and hopes. The author has used both Black and standard English in this book of poems. Specific concerns and problems are addressed;

> "I don't understand
> how 'good' English
> and five times two is ten
> can help buy us more food
> and extra blankets..."

as well as those common to all children;

> "... I want a friend to
> whisper to,
> to keep my secrets
> and to tell me hers..."

Jordan, June. New Life: New Room. Illustrated by Ray Cruz. Scranton, Pennsylvania: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1975.

A family in a two-bedroom project apartment get ready for the arrival of a new baby. This entails the parents' moving to the smaller bedroom and the sister leaving the sofa for a cot in the larger bedroom with her two brothers. Uncertainties are overcome as the children arrange their furniture, discard old toys, and apply colorful paint to their new room. The father's support and encouragement lovingly assist the transition.

> "And Momma would be coming back today
> And a new Baby Girl was coming with her
> And everything was okay
> And everyone was ready."

Thomas, Ianthe. Eliza's Daddy. Illustrated by Moneta Barnett. New York, New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1976.

Eliza's relationship with her father has changed since the divorce and his remarriage, and now he has a new daughter. Every child who has gone through this experience will relate to the curiosity and mixed emotions she is going through.

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CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND THE DISABLED CHILD

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With the implementations of P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, teachers are being provided with in-service preparation and recommendations of methods and materials to successfully "mainstream" disabled children whenever feasible with their non-disabled peers. And hopefully they are being presented with models of instruction where focus is on the strengths of the handicapped child, where he is liberated from the status of a perpetual patient to one of a capable person who happens to have a particular obstacle to live with or overcome.

In selecting and recommending children's literature for these classrooms such a view should be perpetuated. A special effort should be made by teachers and librarians to find suitable books that present children with disabilities in stories where their full humanity is emphasized and not a mere depiction of adjustment to their disability.

As all children do they deserve to see reflections of themselves in books and to have positive role models. Currently there is a plethora of books capitalizing on the attention directed toward the attempt at "mainstreaming." And most compound for the non-disabled the stereotyped view of a physically disabled child as a deviant, highly dissimilar to themselves. As Gliedman and Roth (1980) say in The Unexpected Minority:

> Where is the fantasy, the sense of future, and the freedom of an inventive children's book? Why can't handicapped children have handicapped heroes who solve crimes, pilot spaceships, and even face down some of the nasty prejudices they encounter in school?

> Why can't someone publish children's books that go beyond the mechanics, the physical dimensions of the handicap? Why can't we have books that do more than appeal for 'understanding' and sympathy? (p.227)

We do have them, and the following have been chosen as exemplary books where a handicapped person is one of the characters. They are recommended for mid-elementary through adult readers for their literary quality, sensitivity to a disability, positive role models, and overall excellence as curriculum materials.

Through the classic story of Johnny Tremain, Esther Forbes gives a dramatic and insightful view of Boston prior to and at the beginning of the American Revolution. Johnny, a talented apprentice to a silversmith, suffers an injury when scalding molten silver spills on his hand. Never able to resume his cherished trade, Johnny nevertheless takes an active part in the Boston Tea Party, spying on British soldiers for the Revolutionaries, and carrying messages by horseback. Caught up in the challenge and excitement of the times, Johnny's involvement with other patriots, including a young girl, puts his hand injury as a subsidiary concern and his strength and courage into prominence.

Also depicting an historical period are Laura Ingalls Wilder's reminiscences of her childhood, adolescence, and marriage while moving westward with her pioneering family. Her series of books reaped an overdue acclaim when republished in 1953 with illustrations by Garth Williams. In the fifth volume of this family odyssey, Mary, the oldest of the four sisters, is blinded by scarlet fever. Although realistic adjustments are made by the family and by Mary to compensate, she continues to be a functioning contributing family member. By helping with the housecleaning, taking care of the baby sister, sewing, and eventually going away to a special school for the blind, Mary demonstrates capabilities and a healthy, optimistic spirit.

In Madeline L'Engle's The Young Unicorns, set in New York City's upper west side in the neighborhood of a great cathedral, one of the main

characters, Emily, has been accidently blinded by a robber invading her home. The upstairs of her father's house is rented by Dr. Austin and his family, well known in other L'Engle books. She is tutored and befriended by Dave, a former gang member, whose widower father is a caretaker at the cathedral.

A suspenseful plot of intrigue evolves where disguised villains practice mind control by misuse of a micro-ray gun. Emily has acute senses that compensate for her blindness and enable her, Dave, and little Rob Austin to escape from an unused subway station under the cathedral where they were entrapped by the would-be mind controllers of the city. This is a complex adventure story with an encompassing message of the importance of freedom and love.

The Soul Brothers and Sister Lou, by Kristin Hunter, also reflects the troubled state of cities and adolescents who live within their complexities. This is a powerful story of a black ghetto family struggling against poverty, racism, and police brutality, whose main character, Lou, matures and rises to the challenges of reality. She and her friends compose music, play the piano and sing, and "Blind Eddie", a poor and retired musician in the neighborhood, provides them with technical assistance and an appreciation of the musical heritage of their race. This, combined with their natural talent, leads the group to successful recordings and a measure of fame.

Set in a French village in an indetermined time, Burnish Me Bright, by Julia Cunningham is the story of an orphaned mute boy who works for and lives in the stable of an overbearing farm woman. He is drawn to the home of a retired pantomime actor, once famous, now aged and ill, who nonetheless before he dies has the stamina to train the boy in the art of mime. Auguste makes friends with a weak little girl whom he brings to good health by the magic of the art he has learned. However, suspected of witchcraft by the townspeople, he is driven to the actor's deserted home which is set on fire. At the end he is leaving the village; whether to die or to wander the countryside is left to the reader's imagination. This is a contemporary fairy tale, and the story's appeal is enhanced by

delicate ink sketches by Don Freeman.

In The Witch's Brat by Rosemary Sutcliff, set in medieval England, another orphaned boy, Lovel, is driven from his village, distrusted because of his humped shoulder and twisted leg. Eventually sheltered in a monastery he becomes a menial serving boy until his knowledge of herbs and healing, learned in childhood from his grandmother, elevates his status. Later he leaves to travel to a distant city to help in the building of a great hospital for the poor. As good children's literature is able to do, this story gives clear historic insights into life in medieval times.

Similarly, historic information can be learned from Sing Down the Moon by Scott O'Dell which describes one Navaho tribe's experiences in 1864 of being evicted from their native canyon (in what is now Arizona) and their march of 300 miles to Fort Sumner (in what is now New Mexico). Bright Morning is a young girl who delights in tending her mother's sheep, laughing with her friends, and shyly adoring Tall Boy, a young man of the tribe. She is kidnapped by Spaniards and sold to a white Christian family from whom she runs away. In helping her escape, Tall Boy's arm is permanently injured by a Spaniard's gun. Later, after they have endured the forced march and are encamped at Fort Sumner, the two young people are married with as much of traditional ceremony as can be mustered in the enemy surroundings. Tall Boy's self-image and his status in the tribe are severely hampered by his disability. However, at Bright Morning's insistence the two escape their captors and travel back to their home in the canyon. Tall Boy courageously guides his wife and infant son through the arduous journey to the west and seems to be strong again.

In From Anna by Jean Little, a non-Jewish family, the Kepplers, distressed at the political climate in their native Germany, take advantage of a business opportunity and immigrate to Canada. Anna is the youngest of the five children, and the only one who is awkward and ungainly. A sympathetic Canadian doctor discovers that she is severely visually impaired. With special schooling and a dedicated teacher we see Anna beginning to realize her potential.

The main characters in The Sand Bird, by Margaret J. Baker, are three children in an "ordinary family. Not the sort who are tops in exams or win races" (p.30). Set in a British seaside town this modern fantasy tells how the two brothers and a sister buy a glass swan which has the capability of granting them three wishes. The younger brother, Nobs, is deaf. As in most of these recommended books the adjustment to a physical disability is not the main theme of the story. The authors have chosen other more imaginative and adventurous themes. However, neither is the handicap ignored. It is treated realistically and with a sensitive optimism. And so it is with Nobs' deafness:

> Because of his hearing aid they often forgot their younger brother's deafness, but Nobs never forgot. When his aid was switched off, he was alone as they were never alone. Ever since he was a baby with the microphone of his hearing aid worn in a harness around his shoulders Nobs had needed some help from other people. Now he needed to give that help back. (p.104)

The Grey King, by Susan Cooper, is also a contemporary fantasy. Unlike The Sand Bird it follows a classic tradition where the forces of evil clash with the proponents of good. Two young boys act as dual heros. One, Will Stanton, has come to visit in a Welsh community to recuperate from an illness. While there he remembers that he is an Old One, a servant of the light. Bran, his friend, has grown up in the community and as the conflict evolves he is revealed as having characteristics of a traditional hero in classic mythology. He was an abandoned child, the son of a supernatural lord; a fighter against evil; and with Will makes a journey to an underworld where he is tested and deemed worthy.

In addition, Bran is an albino with impaired vision who experiences the prejudices and cruelties of his peers. His mind reminds him:

> You are different. You are the freak with the white hair, and the pale

> skin that will not brown in the sun, and the eyes that cannot stand bright light . . . they don't like you. Oh, you're different, all right. (p.176)

In a story of complex and sometimes mysterious family relationships, Father's Arcane Daughter by E. L. Konigsburg emphasizes the myriad difficulties of overcoming physical disabilities, in this case a little girl's hearing impairment and muscular incoordination. A long lost half-sister, Caroline, returns home and is able to rescue Heidi who is disabled from an over-protective mother and consequently to release her brother Winston from his role as caretaker. But she confronts the child with reality:

> If Heidi wants to be 'normal' she can just go on home and continue the pretending. If Heidi wants to work--and I mean really work at overcoming her disabilities . . . then I'll agree to call her father and argue her case. (p.98)

Bruce is a spastic boy in An Open Mind by Susan Sallis, and David is also a teen-ager who does volunteer work at the handicapped children's school. Bruce's mother and David's divorced father are in love, and the boys respond to their impending marriage with violent adolescent reactions. David is hostile and dreads to see his mother's place usurped; Bruce feels the constant care he requires will impede the couple's happiness. The resolution of these conflicts and the development of the boy's friendship form the main story line. There are vivid descriptions of the spastic children's adjustments to their disabilities, one particularly where David forcibly restrains Bruce's arms so he can write with a typewriter.

Chris Theodorakis is also confined to a wheel chair because of a spastic condition in The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin. In this complicated, clue-ridden mystery Chris is involved and contributes to its solution. The author presents a promenade of stereotyped characters who struggle to solve a wealthy man's puzzle and succeed in breaking out of their narrow roles. For example, a passive little

Chinese wife grows to take her place as a competent businesswoman; instead of becoming only a young doctor's pretty wife, Angela Wexler attends medical school and becomes a doctor herself. And Chris forbears the others' impatience with his speech and later becomes a college professor with a special knowledge of ornithology.

Set in the rural south The Ugliest Boy by Robbie Branscum presents an appealing, though awkward and ungainly, teen-aged boy, Reb, with his fundamentalist minister father, mother, and young sister. Insights into life in that region's backwoods are gained from the story. The family confronts a cult of "snakers," enjoys the "pounding of the preacher" where parishioners bring food an provisions, and befriends a poor, proud, and garrulous old woman. Reb is blushingly and romantically attracted to Steffie whose loyal friendship and pretty face are far more significant than her crippled foot.

In Emily Hanlon's The Swing, both Beth, a summer visitor, and Danny, who lives in a New England rural community, cherish an old oak tree and the swing it harbors. When overcome by family conflicts and irritations, each runs to its isolated site as though to an understanding friend. Eleven-year-old Beth is deaf but craves independence and freedom to roam the mountain near their vacation home.

Danny resents his step-father's authority over him and revolts against participating in his slaughter-house business. Beth is tormented by two of Danny's friends and is distressed when a mother bear and her cub are hunted down and shot by villagers because of a web of lies told by Danny. The story illustrates by contrast how tense pre-adolescent family situations are shared by both handicapped children and the non-disabled.

In conclusion, some remarks of Ray Charles, the blind musician, are concomitant with the rationale used in selecting these books:

> I hate the word 'handicap'. A person can have obstacles in his way. Everybody has handicaps. I don't want anybody to feel he is different because of a handicap. Your neighbor has something he has to live with . . . O.K. I'm blind. But whatever I do, you can be sure I'm going to do the best I can . . . Whatever I do, my blindness has nothing to do with it . . . Cancel that word 'handicap.' Tell me that I'm good at whatever I do.

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USING LEARNING STRATEGIES TO ACQUIRE COMPETENCE IN MICROCOMPUTING

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Microcomputers and how to use them -- that's the topic of discussion these days. People who have them are sometimes enthusiastic, sometimes discouraged. People who don't have them are curious. Discussion about them is frequent, heated, and everywhere. What gets left out of this discussion is how to learn to use them. If the truth be known, the degree to which people know how to learn new things has a lot to do with their degree of enthusiasm, curiosity, or discouragement.

Hardware, software, programming languages, peripherals, and supplies all are uncharted territory to the individual just beginning to learn about microcomputing. The amount of information to be digested about any one of these is massive. What is an individual to do, particularly when just starting? Take courses? Read? Plunge in? Stay out? Rely on word of mouth? Wait a year?

Fortunately, the answer to these questions is "none of the above". What the individual interested in microcomputing should do is to learn -- and to learn in the most rapid and efficient way possible -- those things needed for successful and intelligent use of the new information handling technology. This learning can be made much easier if the individual uses a few of the tried-and-true strategies that have been making learning easier for many years. They used to be called "study skills". Now we are calling them "learning strategies" or "information processing skills". I prefer the latter term.

What follows is an introduction to the major carriers of information about microcomputers and to information processing skills that might be used to make learning more efficient and effective.

DOCUMENTATION

This term refers to the manuals, instruction booklets, summary cards, and other information that usually accompanies computers, printers, modems, monitors, software, and practically anything that is purchased for use in microcomputing. It is generally written in terms that are confusing to the novice. Futhermore, there are generally errors both of omission and commission, in the text or pictures. Layout and format may be incomprehensible or in a form that does not lend itself to being comprehended. For instance, manuals may be organized alphabetically or by function; in these cases, beginning-to-end reading may serve to confuse and discourage the learner. In most cases, much more material is explained than is actually needed by the user. The problem is one of overload and too much detail.

It is recommended that the user attempt to gain an overview of the material. Surveying of the material is a good idea. Also, selective reading for specific purposes may help keep comprehension at an acceptable level. Highlighting the material and turning down page corners or putting paper clips in strategic locations can turn the worst manual into a useful reference tool. Locating summary pages, overviews, question-and-answer sections, and lists of procedural steps is a must. Preparing a summary card to be kept in the system log or under the monitor can help with remembering frequent, complicated, or useful procedures or commands. The user should attempt to decide what should be read, should read that, and ignore the rest for the time being. Be sure to pay special attention to pictures, charts, italicized words, boldface headings, and the other format characteristics that are there to help you.

SCREENS

New microcomputerists should develop the habit of carefully reading the information given to them by the computer. Generally, good programs will give the user enough information to use them successfully. Command summaries, hints, and directions will often be found at the top or the bottom of the screen. Comparing these screens to

sample screens found in the documentation can save much time and frustration. Of course, the user will want to employ good questioning and purpose-setting strategies in this situation. It is almost always more effective to do a good bit of guessing and experimentation before resorting to the manual.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications useful to the new user of microcomputers include magazines, newsletters, hardware and software house user publications, and advertising literature. The new user should employ this material to its fullest extent.

Magazines contain many useful articles. Users should perform a quick survey of the table of contents to see if there are any immediately useful articles. They should also quickly peruse "special departments", "hands-on", letters to the editor, or applications sections for information that can make use of the computer easier. Advertisements should be searched for interesting developments -- and to see what prices are available from retail, wholesale, and mail order outlets. It is often possible to bargain with the local computer store on the basis of a lower price seen in one of the magazines. It is recommended that products be bought at list price only under two conditions: the user lives in an isolated area and cannot negotiate a better price from the local store; or the full support of the dealer is wanted at a time early in the user's experience.

Magazines contain an especially useful tool: the reader service, or "bingo" card. This card may be used to obtain information about many of the products and services that are advertised or mentioned in the magazine. Liberal use of these cards will yield a wealth of information that may be used or filed for future reference.

PROBLEMS

From time to time, problems will arise. In these cases it is recommended that the user make liberal use of the telephone or face to face contact with dealers or other users who may be able to help with the problem from their own experience. It makes great sense to find a friend or two with the

same machine or software and to make an informal pact to share information. It also makes good sense to join a users' group or two (especially since good discounts on goods and services may often be gotten). It is the experience of most users that others are most willing to share what they know and have learned. This is a two way street -- so be willing to share what you have learned, too. Use good listening skills both to get information efficiently and to know when you have enough.

SERVICES

If you own a modem, you can subscribe to one of the telecommunications services. There are several excellent ones -- and almost all of them have bulletin boards, chat, or CB functions that allow you to communicate with other users with interests similar to yours.

SOFTWARE

Although not learning strategies themselves, most software packages can be classified as learning tools. Word processors, database programs, spreadsheets, and time management programs can save you time, energy, and endless detail work. As you expand your knowledge of them, it is recommended that you always "think lazy". This means that you should always be looking for ways in which the programs that you use can be used more easily themselves, can do things for you that their authors did not intend (or realize), or can be altered to serve your specific purposes. In most cases, simply programmed enhancements (or "patches", as they are sometimes called) can be developed by you or traded with another user.

You should also take full advantage of public domain software, sometimes called "freeware". There are many excellent programs that it is legal to copy and pass around whose authors make them available out of pride and genuine helpfulness. Once you get beyond word processing, database, and spreadsheet programs, you might not have to buy much software. And software acquired this way is legal.

TRADE BOOKS

New users should look for published books that simplify what is made difficult by the documentation. A whole industry has grown up due to the need to make software (and hardware) more accessible for use by owners! Do not be ashamed to buy a copy of Word Processing Made Easy, CalcSheets for Mathophobes, or Databases for Dummies. Getting information the "easy" way is generally the smart thing to do!

CONCLUSION

There are many learning strategies and shortcuts new users can use to gain quick access to competence at microcomputing. Self-confidence and mastery follow quickly when a person takes stock of both learning tools and learning strategies and spends a few minutes in mapping out how information is to be gotten. It needs to be remembered that the microcomputer is a slightly enhanced typewriter -- nothing more -- and that the user ought to be fully in charge of it. And users need to remember that today's headache and frustration is tomorrow's laugh -- and tomorrow's opportunity to help someone even newer at microcomputing to learn easily what made them stumble. As we help each other along, we all gain competence at microcomputing. And perhaps something even more important.

THE READING SPECIALIST IN THE RESOURCE ROLE

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For the 1983 SoMIRAC Conference Jack Cole asked us to make a luncheon presentation relating to an IRA monograph which we co-authored (Bean & Wilson, 1981). This monograph deals with the functions and responsibilities of the Reading Specialist in the resource role.

This created some problems for us since we had no experience in luncheon duets. So, we decided to chat with each other at the luncheon about some of the points we made in our monograph. We wanted to share with the audience some of the thinking that went into our statements of position - much of this thinking never saw the page of print, but it might be interesting, we thought, for others to know our thinking. We tried to make it a light presentation but made very serious points along the way.

This paper, then, is a short synopsis of that presentation.

Bob: Rita, let's write a book on the resource role. We are both committed to the development of that role and, of course, we have nothing else to do. What do you think?

Rita: Ok, I'm for giving it our best shot. I want to be first author, though, because I know I'll be doing most of the work.

Bob: OK! What do you think we should start with first, an outline?

Rita: Sure.

Bob: OK, you draft one and I'll react.

Rita: But first, let's chat over the main issues that might be of concern to those in the reading field. Want to list a few?

Bob: Sure.
1. Record keeping for accountability
2. Diagnosis in the resource role
3. Instruction in the resource role
4. Legal rights of students and parents

Any others?

Rita: Yes.
5. Effective ways of working with others
6. Evaluation of teachers
7. Aspects of the resource role
8. Training the resource reading specialist

INTRODUCTION

Bob: Let us start with a statement about the successful nature of reading teachers. Like Dr. Deasy's (1981) MRI statement that Maryland's reading people have saved the day for public education with their professionalism and commitment to students. Sounds real good. How do we document it? With data or feelings?

Rita: With data. We all have good feelings about reading personnel but we have far too few facts. Any ideas?

Bob: Let's appeal for data. Other fields do this as a part of their jobs. Special education and psychological personnel always collect data on their effectiveness. Prince George's County riffed 32 reading teachers last year and years ago Montgomery County abolished all 5 reading supervisor positions. Why? They had insufficient data about their effectiveness and when budgets get tight - something has to go.

Rita: We could suggest some types of data that might be useful such as:

Number of students served through diagnosis and remediation.
Amount of participation in teacher planning.
Number of demonstration lessons provided.
List of new materials introduced.

Bob: Good stuff. And we could suggest they get reactions from others such as teachers, principals, and supervisors. By having data about their effectiveness, reading specialists will be in a position to justify their professional roles and will receive feedback that could be a great boost to morale.

Rita: And, if there are concerns or criticisms about the roles of reading specialists they can do something about them. I think we should not only start the book with these positive types of things but keep suggesting them throughout the book.

THE READING SPECIALIST AS AN EVALUATOR OF TEACHERS

Rita: What can we say about reading specialists evaluating teachers for the administrator?

Bob: I'd say, "Don't do it - ever!" - I can think of nothing that would interfere more with the resource role.

Rita: While I agree, I think we must also be realistic. At times reading specialists are asked for an evaluation of a teacher. Since it is potentially dangerous shouldn't we offer some advice - some tips about the best way to handle the situation.

Bob: Perhaps. But let's start by suggesting that they should not evaluate teachers if they can get out of it. If they must I have two suggestions: 1. Provide the teacher with immediate feedback. 2. Assure the teacher that you will handle this evaluation with utmost confidentiality - that they will not hear about your evaluation from other teachers.

Rita: Yes, that's good. Maybe we could also suggest that they get the evaluation to the teacher in writing and be available for a conference if one is desired.

Bob: Well, Rita, you can write that section. I'd probably freeze at the typewriter before addressing the issues involved.

WORKING IN THE TEACHER'S CLASSROOM

Rita: I guess a major effort should be made to offer suggestions about working as a resource person in a teacher's classroom. Reading people have traditionally pulled children out of the classroom to work with them instructionally. The resource role suggests that, at least for a part of the time, the reading specialist should be working with the teacher as a team and in the teacher's classroom. Turf problems and teacher defensiveness must be recognized as potential problems.

Bob: Yes, and we might suggest strategies for getting into the classroom when not invited. For example, a new set of materials might come to the school and the reading specialist would like to try them out on a group of children. This may be far less threatening than to ask to come in and see how one might be of some help.

Rita: And, you know, the reading specialist can learn a lot from teachers by being in their classrooms, and confidentiality must be understood. Teachers must be assured that they will not be hearing from others about your visit unless both the teacher and the reading specialist agree to share with others.

THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS

Bob: That reminds me. Do you think a section on the rights of others would be appropriate for a book like this?

Rita: If you think so, then you write it. Seriously, I think it could add a lot. Like the right to privacy. And suggestions about being familiar with school rules and regulations. And, of course, the right to being treated confidentially.

Bob: Yes, these are ethical concerns that can have legal implications. We could add the right to fair treatment and maybe a section on the use of tests for decision making. I'll draft this section and get it to you for your reactions. I can base some of it on the McClung (1977) article on competency testing.

Rita: And don't forget the IRA monograph, Reading and the Law (1978).

DECISION MAKING

Rita: I'd like to do a chapter on decision making. I have a neat model for decision making and we could use it to focus on the steps and procedures for making decisions.

Bob: Especially decisions that affect others.

Rita: Right, and for one in the resource role who must always be considering the effects on others involved with one's decisions.

Bob: Did we follow that model in deciding to write this book?

Rita: I did, but I didn't tell you.

P.S. and it worked. IRA liked the manuscript and published it as an IRA Monograph.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH A CARROT: THE LONG AND SHORT OF USING QUESTIONS TO TEACH

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Several months ago I was talking with a group of primary age youngsters. At that time we were deeply involved in a dialogue between nine different vegetables, each of us attempting to act and sound like a particular "veggie." By a unanimous vote the group decided that I most nearly resembled a carrot. Under the guise of a carrot, I experimented with a variety of strategies intended to "teach" or more specifically, improve the children's ability to comprehend what they read.

In 1978-1979, Durkin reported one of the most cited observational studies ever published. In the report Durkin discussed the wide-spread interrogation style use of questions almost exclusively for assessment (non-instruction) purposes in reading groups and social studies textbook lessons. Perhaps the use of taxonomies of questions is non-productive. We will, however, continue to use questions and if we choose not to use questions, what can we do in place of asking questions?

The following discussion represents a grouping of teaching strategies that appear to aid in or provide direct instruction in teaching reading comprehension. The proper use of questioning skills as a teaching experience and four alternatives to using questions are discussed.

USING QUESTIONS TO TEACH

I am suggesting the use of ReQuest, QAR's and a combination of changes in teacher initiated behaviors during the discussion/questioning of youngsters prior to or following a reading assignment. Manzo (1969) reports on a technique he calls the reciprocal questioning technique or

commonly known as ReQuest. The procedure is simple to use, may be adapted according to reader and/or text difficulty and the ReQuest procedure can be used with individuals or groups of readers.

The strategy calls for a teacher to ask the youngsters to read a line, paragraph or page. Next, a child or pair of youngsters is asked to ask the "teacher" two, three, or four questions about what they just read. The children determine the appropriateness of teacher responses. The process is repeated for two to three pages, using different questioners. Ideally, as teachers we should model "good" questions and guide students in just how to construct a question. The students then apply our examples on their own.

A second promising procedure is based upon a sensible taxonomy originally proposed by Pearson and Johnson (1978). Raphael (1982) describes the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) as " ... a successful method for enhancing student's abilities to answer comprehension questions." The three-way relationship includes the following QAR's. Right There, Search and Think, and On Your Own. Each of the three QAR's represent a teacher given cue as to where an answer may be found.

Right There is applied when using a literal or detail question. Suppose we ask a detail question and receive an unacceptable or perhaps no response at all. The teacher would then say, "The answer is 'right there.'" Initially, we may actually point out the exact words revealing the answer. This combination of modeling and direct instruction features is also recommended for the second type of QAR, Search and Think. For use with questions that involve an answer that is in the story (paragraph, sentence) but requires information from more than one part of the story, Search and Think could be used with what are referred to as "reading between the lines" or text based inference type questions.

The final QAR is recommended for use with the third and perhaps, most difficult level of questions. The critical level question requires an On Your Own search procedure. The reader must use personal knowledge plus information from the paragraph or story. The importance of pre-teaching is evident. Students are taught where to look or

how to go about finding an answer rather than simply being given time to practice answering questions. Using QAR's is logical and representative of a realistic method of using a simple questioning taxonomy for teaching purposes.

IMPROVING TEACHER BEHAVIORS

To make questioning a teaching experience educators may need to adjust how they go about responding to youngsters. The following four suggestions may be helpful.

1. Provide students five to seven seconds to answer questions. Gambrell (1980) describes the proper use and importance of "think-time".

2. Provide cues before providing answers to questions. Both verbal and non-verbal cues can be useful in leading students to determine their own answers.

3. Acknowledge appropriate responses with two to three seconds of eye contact between the respondent and the questioner. A positive verbal response plus noticeable eye contact provide an inducement to answer.

4. Allow for multiple answers, then aid the students in selecting one or two best responses. By extending beyond the "one only" correct pattern, we allow students to consider, pick, and choose or actually see which answers are more appropriate and why.

ALTERNATIVES TO ASKING QUESTIONS

Story Frames involve the reader in a writing process. Fowler (1982) recommends a four step procedure for developing story frames. The process involves a teacher reading a story, determining a type of skill to be applied, and then constructing a cloze type of paragraph leaving a word skeleton of blank phrases and having the student fill in using knowledge from the story.

Example: The story was about _____ _____. _____ tried to _____. Finally _____.

Moore and Arthur (1981) provide an interesting strategy called "Possible Sentences." The technique requires the teacher to select target words from the story. These words are written on the board and the group or class construct possible sentences using pairs of target words. Next, the students read the story. After reading, the teacher assists in editing or modifying of the original possible sentences according to the story. Rewriting the dictated sentences provides an excellent opportunity to teach youngsters to compare information and apply new information in context.

Simulation is an alternative suggested by Herber and Nelson in 1975. The teaching strategy was described as a contrived series of activities used to approximate what one does when comprehending independently (Herber & Nelson, 1975). Prior to giving a reading assignment, the teacher constructs statements to represent a particular skill (e.g., cause-effect, inference). The words and phrases are numbered and an end of line notation is provided to show the page and line of the story from which the statement was taken. After reading the story, the correctness of the words and phrases is accepted or rejected. Discussion can be used to explain the decisions.

Example: rocks/dangerous (2)
higher/more time needed (5)
pleasure/falling from the top (8)

A second stage requires the reader to respond to another group of teacher-generated sentences. This group of statements requires the reader to decide if each is reasonable according to what was learned in the story. Justification of student responses to each statement is encouraged.

Example: __ True climbers are never afraid
__ Training is harmful
__ High winds are refreshing

Sentence combining is recommended as a means of teaching students to use information. After

reading a paragraph or story a teacher may write several related sentences on the chalkboard. With teacher assistance, students combine sentences into fewer sentences. Concepts are consolidated and students learn how to arrange ideas in a more concise manner according to what they have read.

Some liberties have been taken in describing several promising teaching strategies. The discussion is intended to highlight the importance of teacher directed instruction rather than practice. Readers are encouraged to locate the sources noted in this discussion for further details and examples.

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